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# On Wisconsin Outdoors

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TOM CARPENTER

## Cubs Corner

### Teach them young: catch-and-release techniques

In today's world young anglers should know how to release fish. Of course, that starts with you and the example you set. A fish that's going back into the water—whether it's a too-small bluegill, a walleye under the size limit, a nice bass or a big pike—needs to be treated with care, respect and gentleness.

There's nothing wrong with keeping a few fish to eat. If regulations allow it, what's the harm? Plus, boys and girls early in their fishing career love to "save" fish and bring them home. But they tire of that fast and often move quickly into the catch-and-release ethic.

Here are a few reminders and notes to make sure you're doing and teaching catch-and-release right.

- Have fun fighting the fish but don't let it tire itself out *too* much. An exhausted fish may not have the energy to recover.
- Before touching the fish, wet your hands to preserve its protective slime layer. Take a quick photo or two. (Hold the fish out in front of you to have it fill the picture frame and look big. Nothing wrong with this and it's fun to do!)
- Slip the hook out if it's shallow and easily removed in about 10 seconds. If a hook is deep—in the throat or otherwise hard to get at—cut the line or leader. The fish's digestive juices will dissolve the hook. Digging it out causes more harm than good and also keeps the fish out of water too long.
- Don't hold big fish, such as bass, by the lip alone. The weight of the fish can cause the jaw to go out of joint. Always support the fish's weight by holding its tail as you move it about or take pictures.
- Never, ever grab a pike or other fish by inserting your thumb and index finger in the eye sockets. This will injure the fish and probably blind it. Doing this also sends a message of disrespect to the young angler in the boat. Wouldn't you like to catch that pike in five years when it's a 10-pounder?
- Release small panfish with care. This means don't just throw or toss them back. The impact can stun and kill the fish. Message to the kids: Think about catching it again when it's big enough to fillet and fry up.

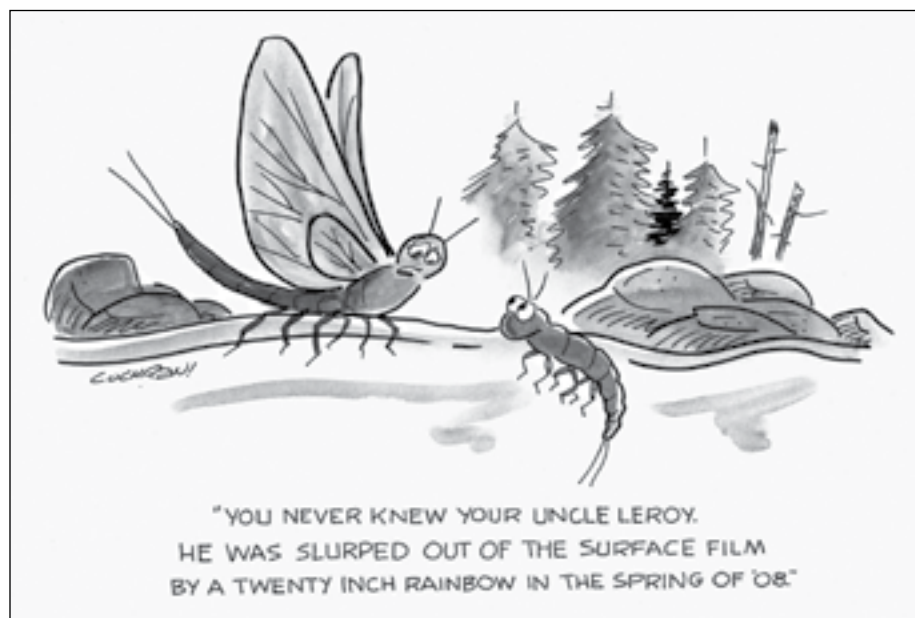


*This healthy pike is going to grow bigger because she's being supported well by wet hands for the camera before being slipped back into the lake.*

- Treat trout very gently. These cold water beauties are delicate. Leave them in the water if you can to remove the hook. If you want to get a picture, do it next to the water. Avoid touching or injuring their gills when slipping out a hook.
- Hold a trout (or other stream fish) gently by the tail, facing into the current for a moment, before letting go.
- In lakes and still waters, hold that fish (such as pike, bass or walleye) in the water just in front of the tail and gently swish her forward and backward a little to revive her. Soon she will rev up, flip her tail and go home.

Releasing fish properly is a lesson in respect for young anglers and an investment in the future. It feels good to let that fish swim off, healthy and strong, to live its life and be caught again. Teach a young angler that lesson early on and you'll have a conservationist for life. *WO*

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



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**JOHN LINDEMAN**

## De Pere's Walleye Run Eyeing alternative options

**M**y first trip to the De Pere dam for the famous Fox River trophy walleye run several years ago was during an ice storm. It was a ghost town above and below the water: no fishermen or fish. That's what made last year's return visit so shocking. When you're actively part of conversations taking place in six boats, things are crowded.

My buddy Jon nudged his way into an open spot and called for anchor deployment. As I was drawing air into my lungs to voice my disagreement, he gave me the look and anchors aweigh it was. There we sat. I could cast 45 feet at 5 o'clock and 50 feet at 8 o'clock. Awesome.

A couple hours later we left the mayhem in search of greener pastures downstream. We found peace and quiet, along with a few nice walleyes. We were not alone, but a dozen widely-scattered boats seemed like heaven to me.

We found shallow flats to toss cranks or hop plastic back to the boat. There are breaks, points, turns in the channel, depressions and humps to search. There

is even a warm water discharge and huge bridge abutments that attract resting walleyes on their way to the spring dance. Do a little vertical jigging while searching and action will find you.

We started vertical jigging plastic along the channel slipping up and down from 7 to 15 feet of water. This day, walleyes seemed to be situated at the bottom of the break. Jon was attracting the most action, per usual. It's his boat and he sits right over the bow mount trolling motor. That is a huge advantage when vertical jigging.

An effective variation to hopping the jig vertically is holding it motionless inches off the bottom while floating with the current. This works best using plastic that undulates with the slightest movement.

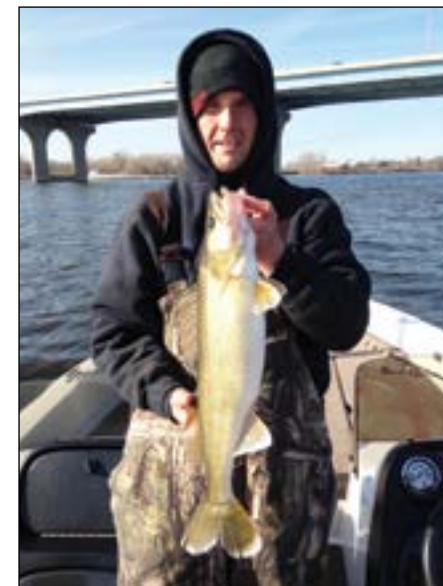
The bite wasn't hot, but we were enjoying ourselves. By day's end we managed to entice a half-dozen male walleyes into the net between 19 and 23 inches. I was happy with the success until a call from Jon's son, Mark, revealed another, more



*Not every walleye heads for the shallows at the De Pere Dam. Appleton's Jon Markley strikes a pose with a Green Bay walleye found farther downriver.*

productive option. When I heard Jon say "14 walleyes," I hit the roof.

Mark was anchored atop the break casting upriver with 1/8-ounce jigs tipped with plastic. He would let the current do the rest. The tumbling action of the jig along the bottom created when current pulled the line along seemed to trigger a bite. The result was 14 walleyes. No trophies, but plenty of action.



*Oshkosh's Matt Markley tosses light jigs upriver letting the current tumble them slowly past an anchored position.*

If it's crowded at the dam, heading downstream is an option. And when it's a jungle up there, these tactics just might produce more walleyes and will ensure less competition. *W*

Wisconsin native John Lindeman has turned his passion for fishing into a business that provides effective products with innovative twists. The owner of Kingdom Fishing Innovations enjoys all types of fishing from small creeks to the Great Lakes. He can be reached at [jlindeman@gokfin.com](mailto:jlindeman@gokfin.com).

**TYLER FLORCZAK**

## How To Catch Giant Late Winter Pike With Tip-Ups Finding monster, pre-spawn northerns

**W**hen it comes to the hard water season, northern pike are my family's favorite fish to target.

Pike are the first fish to spawn each year and feed much more aggressively as females fill out their eggs and gravitate toward spawning grounds in mid- to late February.

Monster pike are the biggest, most aggressive fish in Wisconsin lakes. They are powerful, fast-moving, and are generally easy to target on waters with strong populations. Pike feed during the day, so anglers don't have to rise early or stay late to fish them. Lastly, they are some of the

Badger State's best table fare.

### Equipment

Beaver Dam tip-ups are a personal preference when it comes to ice fishing. They are the easiest to use, most durable and by far the most efficient.

Use 30 - 40-pound braided line when targeting pike. Attach a swivel and leader line. I use 20-pound Berkley Fluorocarbon Vanish. Some may scoff, thinking pike will cut through 20-pound line with ease. But I like the fact that the line is invisible under water and is extremely abrasion resistant. Steel leaders also work

well and eliminate the chances of being cut off. Stick with No. 4 or No. 6 hooks almost exclusively for big pike.

*Tip: My family uses homemade devices called "ice blankets" as hole covers. They shade the hole and eliminate unnatural light penetration, which can prevent strikes. This prevents ice from forming in the hole.*

### Location


Preferred pike spawning grounds are usually near creek mouths, especially on the northern end of lakes. Backwaters,

*continued on page 32*




*Gary Florczak holds a 40.5-inch pike he caught and released on the Chetek Chain of Lakes in January while fishing with a large shiner for bait. He estimated the fish weighed about 19 pounds. (Photo by Tyler Florczak)*





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## “Long” Telescoping Rods

### *Farther casting means more fish*

The sport of musky fishing has certainly changed over the past 15 years. Increased stocking programs and musky management offer us new waters to explore. The practice of catch and release allows many fish to reach their true size potential, giving us anglers the opportunity at true trophy fish.

As the sport itself continues to grow and change, so has our equipment. From high tech electronics like the introduction of Sonar/GPS units and now “down imaging” and “side imaging” and “structure scan” to the rods and reels we use. The days of the 5-foot extra stiff “broom handle” rod and Abu Garcia 5001c spooled with 30-pound Dacron fishing line are gone. Most of us are now using rods that are at least 7 feet, 6 inches, with many people reaching for sticks in the 8- to 9-foot range and longer.

As I write this, I recently returned from the Chicago Muskie Expo at the Sears Centre Arena in Hoffman Estates, Illinois. The hottest selling items in the tackle industries booth were the new “long” telescoping rods. These rods have been available in 9-foot models for several seasons. This year, however, James Haworth redesigned the rods and is now offering them in 9 feet, 6 inch; 10 feet; and 10 feet, 6-inch lengths. They are available in three different actions: Casting, Mag, and Mega. Check out the website at tackleindustries.com for a full description.

You might be asking yourself, “What are the benefits to these long rods?” or “What in the world do I need a 10-foot, 6-inch rod for?” Trust me, I asked the same thing. I had the opportunity to field test these rods last season before their release, and I have to say that I love them.

The first thing I noticed was a significant increase in casting distance. These long rods allow you to bomb some baits out there when needed. Second was the ease of the figure eight. While I will admit that there is a bit of a learning curve



*A nice musky caught while field testing the new Tackle Industries “Long” rods.*

in this area if you aren’t used to a longer rod, once you get the hang of it figure eight-ing is a breeze. You can really get the baits down deep and make big wide turns without bending over or dropping down to your knees. Finally, when you have a fish on, especially boat side, these long rods help with the battle. They allow you to take it to the fish. Plus, the longer rod is more forgiving when those big girls start bull dogging on you and actually acts as a bit of a shock absorber, helping you keep the fish pinned until it’s in the net.

If you haven’t tried out a long rod yet, I suggest giving one a try this season. Like anything new, it’s not for everybody. Some of you might love your 7-foot, 6-inch rod, and there is nothing wrong with that at all, but getting a long rod might help you stay on the water a little longer or keep that big girl hooked a tick longer so she can get her picture taken. What do you have to lose? *W*

*Clay Heller operates HP-Outdoors. He guides on the waters of southeastern Wisconsin from April through November. Contact Clay through his website at hp-outdoors.com or at 920.256.0648.*

**GARY ENGBERG**

## Gary Engberg

### *Outdoors*

### *Early spring crappies*

The ice has been off most area lakes for a couple of weeks now, and soon Dane County’s panfish hot spot will be in full swing. I’m talking about Crystal Lake, located in northern Dane County near the Columbia County border and a few miles east of the Wisconsin River. This spring-fed 500-acre lake has a maximum depth of only 12 feet, but it contains a tremendous panfish population that starts biting very soon and continues throughout the year.

Much of the early panfish action is for crappies, which start moving into the shallows when the water temperature hits the 40s. The southern end of the lake has been rip-rapped, allowing people to fish from shore, which is the preferred technique here in the spring. The water level on this lake has been receded from the high water years, but there still is considerable wood and flooded timber around the shoreline. This makes for some ideal habitat for the spawning crappies. Crystal Lake also has a very good bluegill population that makes their beds in May and June. Perch, largemouth bass and bullheads comprise the rest of this lake’s fishery.



*Bob Zownir of Madison, Wisconsin, with a Crystal Lake crappie.*

The preferred way to fish these early crappies is to go ultra-light. A good, sensitive rod, say, 5 1/2 feet long with a fast action (G. Loomis SR661), a quality spinning reel (Daiwa SS700), and Stren 4-pound test line in either Easy Cast or Magnathin. As far as terminal tackle goes, I would use ice-fishing jigs tipped with wax worms, spike, or a piece of crawler. Have an assortment of colors and styles in the ice jigs and also some of the plastics like “noodles or wedgies,” which work wonders along with Berkley’s Gulp. Next, put a small split shot and one of

*continued on page 13*

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**PHIL SCHWEIK**

## Early Season Walleyes

### *Recipe for success*

As most of you know, some of the largest walleyes of the year are taken during the annual spring walleye run. This is the time of the year when the masses of walleyes begin their annual migration to traditional spawning grounds. Here in central Wisconsin this typically means sometime in April. Depending on weather conditions, water temperature and current flow rate, the walleye run may be delayed or moved up. Each year, with much anticipation, thousands of anglers eagerly await the annual spring walleye run—and with good reason. The walleyes are at their largest and are the easiest to target.

When targeting walleyes during the spring walleye run, you don't need to be a rocket scientist to figure out where they are going to be. A few general rules will put you in good position to catch some nice fish. The first and probably most often targeted area for spring walleyes is below dams on rivers. Since these are easy access areas and the water is shallow, fish concentrate heavily here this time of year. Once the walleyes are at the dam they can go no farther upriver. Downstream areas in-

clude shallow rocky runs, inside current breaks, eddies and other non-current areas. These are all great locations to target walleyes during the spring run.

For lures and presentation I primarily use two types of baits: a jig and minnow combination and/or floating crankbaits like a Rapala. I use the jig and minnow combination most of the time, but especially when I am fishing really lethargic fish and when I am fishing non-current areas or locations with water depths of over 5 feet. I typically run 1/16th- and 1/8th-ounce jigs but will bump it up to a ¼- to 3/8th-ounce jig if the water is deeper or the current is too fast. For color selection I like a combination of green and orange or yellow and orange, or white and pink.


The Rapalas come out when I am looking for walleyes in faster current and after dark, particularly when the fish are primarily feeding up in shallower water. My typical Rapala selection consists of lures in the 3- to 6-inch range in a variety of colors consisting of fire tiger, black and silver, gold and silver, and orange and



*Ron Hall and John Niko from Chicago with some fine spring walleyes.*

gold.

If spring walleye fishing isn't something that you have tried, get out and give it a shot. You may be surprised with the largest walleye of your life.

Have a great season. 

*Phil is the owner of Hooksetters Guide Service in central Wisconsin and Hookset Adventures in Eagle River, Wisconsin, which keeps him on the water over 200 days a year. Phil lives in Mosinee, Wisconsin, and can be reached at pschweik@dwave.net, on his website: hooksetters.biz or hooksetadventures.com, at 715.693.5843 or on Facebook at Phil Schweik.*

**DAVE DUWE**

## Rod Bending Brown Trout Action

### *Lake Michigan offers big fish fun*

When the gamefish season closes in early March in Wisconsin, anglers have an opportunity to move from the inland waterways to Lake Michigan. Lake Michigan provides ample big fish catches that will keep you busy until the gamefish season reopens in May.

With warm spring rains and warm discharges from power plants along the shoreline, the brown trout are drawn to the temperate waters for aggressive feeding. Brown trout fishing can be productive from Sturgeon Bay to Racine and Kenosha. Some of my favorite locations are the Sheboygan power plant, Milwaukee Harbor, and the Oak Creek power plant (Bender Park). Don't overlook the small feeder creeks and tributaries that flow into the lake; they will also add

warm water into the system.

Brown trout will become active near shore in early spring (March - May). Lake Michigan can allow open water action almost all winter long depending on the severity of the winter. As a rule, I work a depth range of 8 to 15 feet of water. With fishing in such close proximity to shore, the average angler with a smaller boat has access to this quality fishery. Fishing shallow waters in a small boat enables you to move in stealth mode and not spook the shallow trout. Cloudy days have a tendency to be better than sunny, eliminating the shadow a boat can make. This bite is temperature-related, so waiting to fish until later in the day can make the bite better.

One of the greatest concerns with small craft fishing on Lake Michigan

is the wind. The best wind for fishing the west shoreline of Lake Michigan is a west or south wind. This will keep the warmer water near shore and the waves manageable. East wind creates a threefold problem: water clarity, big waves and colder water that gets blown to shore.

Make no mistake, though. The ultra-clear water can be as bad as really muddy water. Fishing in shallow water, you want some color to the water as this brings the fish off the rock bottom where they are hiding and makes them more active. I try to key in on the zone between the clean water and the murky water, called the "mudline" by most anglers. Oftentimes it is the feeding zone for the brown trout.

For early spring brown trout fishing I



*Author and son Nathan with early spring success.*

like a lighter presentation. This is a perfect application for your walleye trolling rods. A good example is a line counter Abu Garcia 6500 on a 7-foot, 6-inch to 8-foot, 6-inch medium action trolling rod. The reels should be spooled with 10-pound Silver Thread or Trilene. The lures of choice are crankbaits. You need to experiment with the color patterns for the conditions. Berkley Flicker Shads and Rapala Shad Raps are my baits of

*continued on page 11*



# Weekend Freedom Machines



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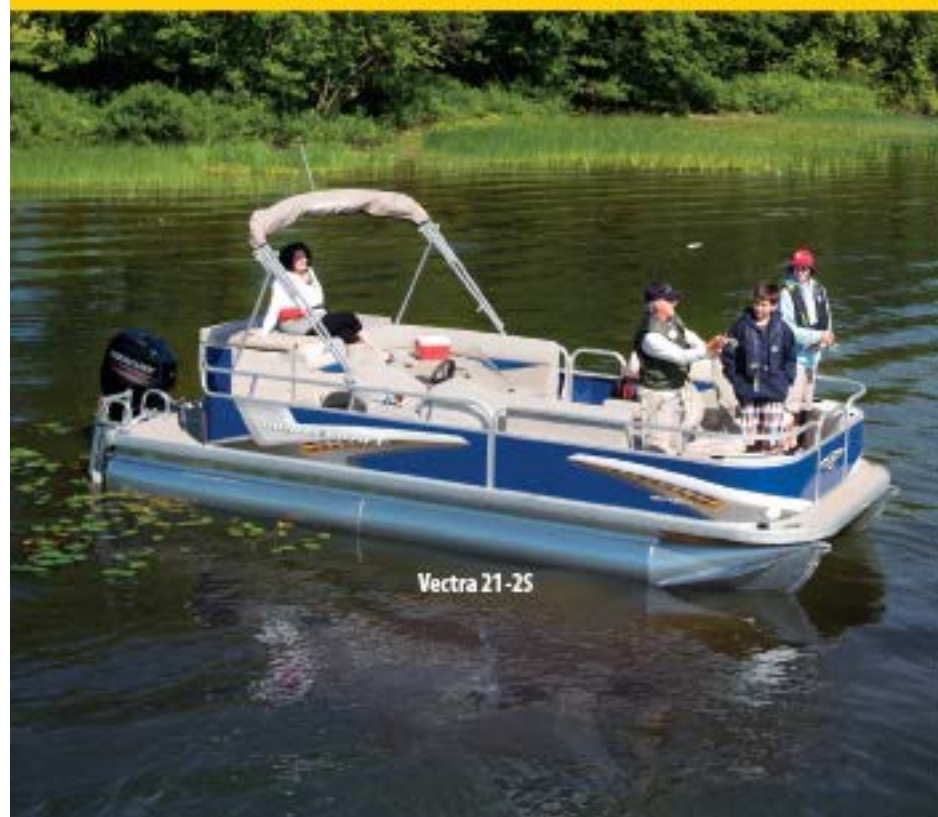
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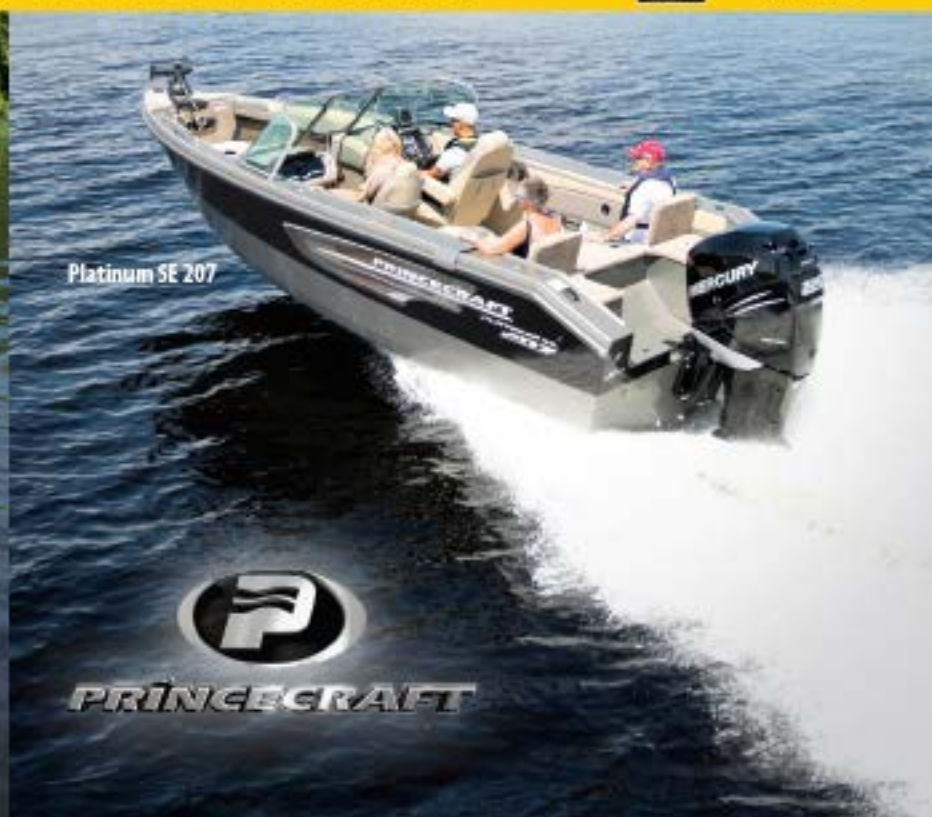
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## More Than Just Made In Wisconsin

### *Finding out what makes Wisconsin's outdoor companies successful*

What is the significance beneath the "Made in Wisconsin" tag? Is it the pride of using home-grown resources? Is it the recognized quality of the product? Or is it simply peace of mind knowing where it actually comes from? Whichever way, Wisconsinites can make use of their state's richness and culture by expressing there is more to buying than just grabbing a familiar or inexpensive item off the shelf and placing it in a cart.

Choices that people make affect not only themselves but also people inside and outside their communities. There are some great examples of companies committed to Wisconsin's very own outdoors' men and women. Whether it's the middle of summer and the family wants to bask in the lacustrine sun on one of Wisconsin's 10,000+ lakes and rivers, or the fall and bow hunters put a year's preparation into the pursuit of a lifetime, or a snow-filled winter driving people to explore solid white woods and endless trails, Wisconsin manufactures are there to endeavor as well.

For example, Evinrude Outboard Motors, headquartered in Sturtevant, is 100% manufactured in the Dairy State. The brand founded by Ole Evinrude in 1907 is committed and engineered to fuel efficiency, low emissions and low maintenance. In a recent interview, Rus Graham explained, "Evinrude employees have an active outdoor lifestyle, and there truly is nowhere else to enjoy the four seasons like Wisconsin. And with sister brands such as Sea-Doo, Ski-Doo and the Can-Am Spyder, there are a lot of ways they can enjoy the outdoors."

Also in the marine industry, Mercury Motors employs over 5,000 employees and is headquartered in Fond du Lac with testing facilities right next door in Oshkosh. They, too, are committed to low emissions and standard setting performance. They were named Wisconsin

Manufacturer of the Year in both 2006 and 2013 for reasons such as "commitment to total quality," "investment in training and retraining," and "commitment to community."

Hunting-based company Matthews Inc. is located in Sparta and employs a staff of nearly 400 people. Their success is "predicated on our commitment to three steadfast core values: innovation, integrity, and impact." On the local level, they are strong supporters of organizations like Boy Scouts as well as blood and food drives. Nationally, they are the driving force behind the National Archery in the Schools Program, reaching out to nearly 7 million students thus far.

In the snacking world, Jack Link's high quality protein foods have been "Feeding the Wild Side" of Northwood residents for over one hundred years! Staking claim in the town of Minong, this company emphasizes the satiety and protein of the food they produce. As a result, they manufacture their snacks with lean meat, the most authentic kind of snack protein, to ensure consumers are treated to a valuable product.

The list goes on and on from fishing companies like Glo-Pro Lures and Hard and Soft Fishing to other food companies like Johnsonville Sausage and Oscar Meyer. The point, though, is that there is more that happens when a barcode hits a scanner than merely a business transaction. Every time the "ping" sounds, the product's manufacturer receives support. Therefore, shoppers should be cognizant of some of the companies built on community intentness, especially locally.

Author Laura Hartman explains it as such, "Good consumption is performed in gratitude, [it's] savored, and shared ... [it] means to consume as a good steward ... in a way that is aware of the ethical challenges of enjoyment in an imperfect

world, avoiding a denial of others in need or of the good of creation."



Kyler Chelminiak is a collegiate angler at Bethel University in McKenzie, Tennessee, but still calls Wisconsin land his home. Aside from his devotion to bass fishing, Kyler embraces any and all activities in the outdoors with faith, family and friends.



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GLENN WALKER

## Dissecting The Spawn

### Targeting spring bass

Many times when bass anglers are discussing what seasonal pattern the fish are in the one that generates the most discussion is the spawn. When this term is used to refer to the seasonal pattern of a bass, it can be further dissected into three phases: pre-spawn, spawn and post-spawn.

During the pre-spawn phase bass want to be in areas of a lake or river that allow them to get into prime position to move into their spawning areas as soon as the time is right. They also want to be in areas that let them feed up to the big event of spawning.

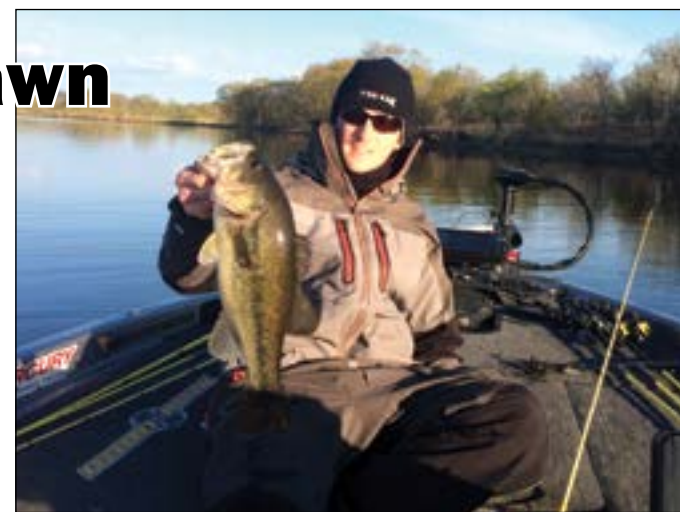
Many times these locations are transition areas strategically located between a bass's wintering or late fall stomping grounds and its spawning grounds. The form of cover or structure can be many different things. The key point here is the location of it. Many pre-spawn bass will hold on secondary points just on the outside of spawning bays or possibly the first steep break on a shoreline that has spawning cover up shallow.

When it comes time to wet a line for pre-spawn bass, I like to use a crankbait or a Carolina rig. Both of these lures can be adapted to fish at any depth, and both allow anglers to cover water quickly.

As the water temperatures begin to climb and a full moon is present, bass will get that internal message, which sends them to the shallows to spawn. Areas to look for spawning bass are where the water warms quickly, such as bays off the main lake or backwater sloughs that are close to but out of the current.

Once you are in a prime spawning bay, possible spawning spots can be behind stumps, on lily pad stems and under or around boat docks. What all of these items have in common is that they are a hard piece of cover a bass can spawn on, providing some protection from predators.

Flipping a bait onto or just beyond that bed and dragging it onto the bed is a great presentation to coax the bass into biting. Sometimes a jig and chunk works best. Other times it needs to




*Catching pre-spawn bass is a blast. They are big and hungry!*

be a Texas-rigged soft plastic bait. To aid in your ability to see your bait on the bed, try using a white-colored bait on a Texas rig.

Once bass are done spawning they move from their shallows and back to the first form of cover they can find. This often is an inside weedline on a lake or laydown dotted shoreline on a river. What these areas provide is cover for the bass to be protected while they recoup from the spawning process, along with ambush areas to grab food as they need to replenish.

Using reaction style baits provoke these fish into biting and keep you on the move so you can eliminate unproductive water quickly. A swim jig is a great lure this time of year, as it can be cast around cover, retrieved back to the boat. The other tactic that I like to use to target post-spawn bass is a topwater walk-the-dog style plug or a soft plastic frog.

With spring here we all get to enjoy more daylight, warmer temperatures and open water. Make use of your time and hit your favorite lake or river and target some bass, but don't forget to dissect the spawn first. 

*Glenn has been fishing tournaments for over 10 years, spreading his passion and knowledge of the sport via articles and videos. For more information, check out [glennwalkerfishing.com](http://glennwalkerfishing.com) or [facebook.com/glennwalkerfishing](https://www.facebook.com/glennwalkerfishing).*

MIKE YURK

## Bassology

### A variation on the Wolf River Rig

The Wolf River Rig is a classic bait rig. It has been around at least since the late 1950s, as long as I have been fishing. I suspect the Wolf River Rig, or something like it, goes back a good century or longer.

It is a simple but effective bait rig, which has withstood the test of time because it works. It has caught millions of fish over the years. Many magazines refer to it simply as a three-way rig, but the name "Wolf River Rig" suggests it was named after the Wolf River where it might have originated.

#### The Classic Wolf River Rig

The Wolf River Rig starts with a three-way swivel. Two of the swivels have leaders. One leader is about a foot long with a bell-shaped sinker. The other has a 15- to 18- inch leader with a hook. The sinker can be changed to a heavier or lighter one depending on the current. It seemed to be designed primarily for river fishing but has been used in lakes also.

My grandfather taught me how to fish. He was a live bait fisherman and all he used was the Wolf River Rig, so it was all I used, too.

We fished on Lake Winnebago and the Fox and Wolf Rivers. In the 1950s and '60s you could find Wolf River Rigs at almost any bait shop, gas station, bar, sport shop or anyplace fishermen gathered along the rivers. I remember going into a bar with my grandfather and behind the bar next to the cigars and pints of liquor was a card of Wolf River Rigs.

That was over a half century ago. Now I live on the other end of the state, and instead of the Wolf and Fox Rivers I have the Mississippi River. As I started walleye and sauger fishing on the Mississippi I

*continued on page 15*





GORDON PAGEL

## A River Guide

### A simpler way to fish

Hopefully, the title says it all. I have been fishing rivers since I could walk. My dad would sit me down on the banks of the Little Wolf or its south branch when the redhorse suckers were running and put a rod in my hands. That potential link, that connection to whatever it was that lurked below those swirling waters, captivated me. I never wandered. I think I was an easy fishing partner, even at the age of two. No need for talk or exploring the banks of the river ... just let your imagination do the wandering. It was a simpler way to fish. To this day, rivers still captivate me, and I know I have my dad to thank for that.

And I still like to keep it simple, which is what this column will always be about. Simple doesn't always mean easy, but it does mean whatever I share here will be repeatable by you, and it will be affordable. And I won't compromise in regard to catching big fish or numbers of fish, either. But I will show you a different way to catch them. I like to call it "fair chase fishing."

Last spring on the Peshtigo River an opportunity for keeping it simple pre-

sented itself. It was about the time the down run portion of the migration had begun and water levels were receding. Access downriver was getting more difficult, and boats were concentrating up near the landing. That's when I had a discussion with my clients about taking a different approach.

The Peshtigo River has limited development on its shores from the dam in Peshtigo to the mouth. Much of the land is public, and accesses are available providing multiple put-in and take-out opportunities. By doing a little scouting on Google Earth, I came up with a float trip I was sure would provide six hours of fishing without need of a shuttle. But it

would require a commitment of some sweat equity. The decision was made to float the river in NuCanoes ([www.nucanoe.com](http://www.nucanoe.com)) and bypass the crowds entirely. NuCanoes are a hybrid between a kayak and a canoe. It turned out to be one of the most rewarding trips I took last year.


Most of the fish were headed back to the bay at this point and they were scattered everywhere. Once on the water, drifting and casting jigs with live bait and plastic were the effective presentations. The fish were aggressive, and eventually we were throwing swimbaits only. If you hooked up, the anchor would go down until you landed the fish. Then several more casts were made in the vicinity, often resulting in one or two more fish.

Fishing with Dad.



After multiple casts without a hit, it was back to drifting and casting until another hook-up, drop anchor, land fish, and repeat.

Simple.

If I were told I could only fish two rivers, it would be the Peshtigo and the Embarras. 

Connect with Captain Gordon Pagel at [ariverguide.com](http://ariverguide.com) or 920.841.2118 or [gordy@ariverguide.com](mailto:gordy@ariverguide.com).



*There is nothing simpler than fishing a jig and minnow. Jig fishing is real fishing.*


DUWE, from page 6

choice. The past few years purple or fire-tiger patterns have been the best choices, as these lures will match the smelt and alewife baitfish within the system.

With the light line trolling presentation I use planer boards. The ones I like are the Church Tackle walleye TX-22 or the TX-007 stern board. The stern planer board allows you to get the crankbaits away from the prop wash of the boat while maintaining an exact repeatable presentation. For shallow diving crankbaits I put the lure 30 - 35 feet behind the board.

Of course, the longer the distance behind the board the deeper the bait will

run. Trout will be throughout the water column; however, the suspended fish are more active. Trolling speeds of 1.5 - 2.0 mph will put fish in your boat.

In Lake Michigan it is very possible to catch brown trout in excess of 20 pounds. Hooking up with one on light line will give you the fight of a lifetime. How's that for excitement during panfish-only season? 

Dave Duwe is owner of Dave Duwe's Guide Service and guides the lakes of southeastern Wisconsin, specializing in Delevan Lake and Lake Geneva. Find him at [fishlakegeneva.com](http://fishlakegeneva.com) or [fishdelavanlake.com](http://fishdelavanlake.com) or contact him at 262.728.8063.

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JERRY KIESOW

# Fly Fishing In Wisconsin

## New trout regulations explored, part two

This is a continuation of last issue's new regulations for those who fish trout. Last issue we told you about the new starting date for the catch and release, artificial only, season—January 2 through May 6—and how the regular catch and digest season will now open the following day, May 7 (instead of a week later). I took advantage of this new rule and went trouting on the Onion in Sheboygan County on a cloudy but unseasonably warm day. Dead drifting my own #8 Rapids Nymph, I caught a feisty little brown trout. A great way to begin 2016, don't you think?

In addition to the above date changes, the DNR has designed the *proposed* new regulations to be more user friendly. There will be only three colors identifying the specific regulations of each stream instead of four. (Actually, if you count black as a color, there are still four colors: green, yellow, red, and black. But what do I know?)

What does each color represent? Just think *stop and go light*. Green means go ahead and fish for any trout of any length and catch and keep up to five of them in aggregate (total). Yellow means caution. These waters require the trout to be at least eight inches long, and you may only keep three. If you plan to fish a red river/stream/creek, stop! These waters have individual regulations. Be sure to check each waterway before you wet a line. Then we have the "no color," black. These rivers are the Lake Superior and Lake Michigan tributaries, which have their own set of rules.


The colors not only have changed on

the maps, some of the rivers/streams/creeks have been re-categorized, so you definitely need to get a set of the new regulations before you go out to fish.

Another "make it simpler to understand" innovation of these regulations is each listing of each county stream is now color coded to match the colors on the maps. That definitely makes life easier. For example, Marinette County, where I spend time, picking one of the creeks at random, the old booklet reads: "Beaver Creek (including north and south branches) - Category 4." Since I do not have a strong memory, I would have to go to the front of the booklet to find out what Category 4 meant. The new proposal reads: "Beaver Creek - Red (highlighted). Daily bag limit and length limit: 3 in total. Brown and rainbow trout over 12 inches; brook trout over eight inches." It's all right there.

As of this writing the booklet has not been published. I printed it off the Web. It is only a draft proposal, but it looks pretty good to me.

Those are the highlights. Space does not allow me to explain every change, so go to [dnr.wi.gov](http://dnr.wi.gov) and search "trout review." Remember, depending on when you read this, those rules may not yet be finalized.

See you in the river. Keep a good thought! 


*Jerry enjoys all aspects of the outdoors. To keep track of what he is doing and where, see his photos, and read some of his other writings, including his book, "Tales of The Peshtigo Putzer," check out his website: [jerrykiesowoc.com](http://jerrykiesowoc.com).*

ENGBERG, from page 5

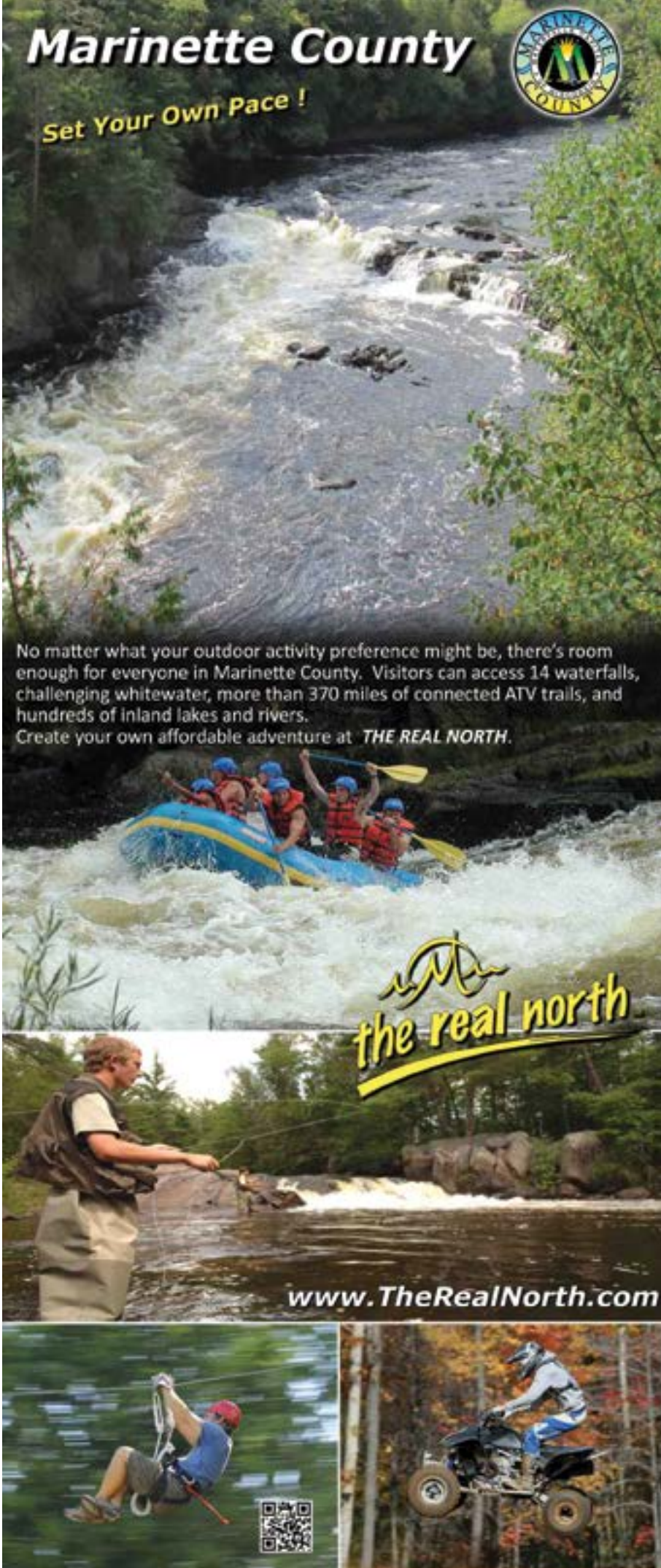
the new "Rocket" floats on your line. You get distance with these floats and they work extremely well. Cast this rig out and slowly retrieve it, popping it now and then while retrieving and vary your cadence, even stopping and letting it sit. Small minnows on jigs and small #8 or 10 hook work, too. Experiment with jig and plastic colors till you find what the fish want that day.

Try fishing during the week and you will have plenty of room, since weekends

can be crowded. There is a good boat landing at the south end that can accommodate any size boat. The limit is 25 crappies, which is more than enough for anyone these days.

Contacts: Wilderness Fish and Game, 608.643.2433, and McFarland's True Value, 608.643.3321, both in Sauk City, Wisconsin. 

Contact Gary Engberg at 608.795.4208 or [gengberg@garyengbergoutdoors.com](mailto:gengberg@garyengbergoutdoors.com), or visit [garyengbergoutdoors.com](http://garyengbergoutdoors.com).



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**SUZETTE CURTIS**

## Recipes By Suzette

### *Fish loaf with sauce*

This column came about in response to a recent dinner situation in our home. We had some fish in our freezer that wasn't marked, so its origin was a mystery. The fish was thawed, cooked and served (luckily not to guests), and the meal was fairly disappointing. Perhaps the fish had been in the freezer far too long, or maybe it had not been packaged properly. Either way it turned out too dry. Not wanting to throw out the whole lot, a loaf experiment was set in place, and after some tweaking, a really great meal was had. If you've cooked fish with disappointingly dry results, give this recipe a shot along with one of the sauces. Enjoy!

### Fish Loaf

1 to 1 ½ lbs. cooked fish, flaked  
1 onion, finely chopped  
1 egg, beaten  
1 ¼ cup shredded cheese of preference (Cheddar, Swiss, Monterey Jack, Colby, etc.)  
1 cup bread crumbs  
½ cup milk  
¼ cup dry white wine  
4 T. olive oil  
1 T. Dijon mustard  
1 T. lemon juice  
1 T. dried dill  
salt and pepper to taste

Preheat oven to 350°. Combine all ingredients in large bowl. It's best to get your hands into it and mix well. Transfer mixture to well-greased or sprayed loaf pan. Bake loaf for 30 minutes. Let sit five minutes before cutting and serving with one of the following sauces.

### Dill Sauce

½ cup mayonnaise  
½ cup plain Greek yogurt  
1 tsp. lemon juice  
½ tsp. dried dill

Mix all ingredients together in small bowl. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour before serving atop or alongside fish loaf.

### Warm Egg Sauce

2 T. butter  
2 T. flour  
1 cup milk  
1 T. lemon juice  
1 T. sweet red pepper, finely chopped  
2 hardboiled eggs, chopped  
salt and pepper to taste

Melt butter in saucepan over medium heat. Stir in flour to make a paste. Gradually add milk, stirring constantly. Increase heat to medium-high, continue stirring until sauce thickens. Remove from heat and add remaining ingredients. Serve atop or alongside fish loaf.

### Cool Cucumber Sauce

1/2 cup mayonnaise  
1/2 cup sour cream  
1/2 seedless cucumber, finely chopped  
1 small onion, finely chopped  
1 tsp. dried dill

Mix all ingredients together in small bowl. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour before serving atop or alongside fish loaf.

*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](mailto:recipesbysuzette@onwisconsinoutdoors.com).*



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DAN MOERICKE

## An "Up Nort" Report

### Thoughts on fishing and beer

☞ Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish and he'll sit in a boat drinking beer for hours."

While mulling over that old nugget of wisdom with a Leinie's Creamy Dark the other night, it occurred to me just how important beer is to nearly every facet of fishing. Just think about it...

**The Planning Process:** The Leinie's Guys and I have been taking an annual fishing trip we call the Great Walleye Assault (GWA) for 32 years. Every year it gets bigger and better. Bigger means more complicated and more moving parts. Heck, it's like solving a Rubik's Cube just to get all of the right guys and the right stuff to the right place at the right time. In planning an event of this magnitude, we don't even *think* about making a decision unless we have a cold beer in hand.

**Types of Fishing Compatible with Beer Drinking:** We are predominately wall-eye fishermen, usually casting jigs tipped with live bait. The beautiful part about jig fishing is that once you make a cast there's always that brief delay while you let the jig settle to the bottom ... perfect time to sneak in a quick sip of your favorite brewski.

*continued on page 17*



YURK, from page 10

came back once again to the simple, effective and lowly Wolf River Rig.

#### A New Variation

I made a variation on the basic Wolf River Rig. The bell-shaped sinker was replaced with a jig. I use ½-, ¾- and 1-ounce jigs depending on the strength of the current. Because of water conditions I usually use lighter jigs in the fall and heavier ones in the spring. For color I use nothing but chartreuse since the water is usually highly discolored.

On the other leader with the hook I add two to four chartreuse-colored beads. Although I normally use a chartreuse hook, I don't think the color of the hook is all that important. One of my fishing buddies uses a small chartreuse floater instead of beads and it seems to work as well.


My grandfather and I dropped the Wolf River Rig down until it was 4 to 6 inches off the bottom, propped our rods against the side of the boat, and waited for a fish to hit. We knew we had a strike when the rod tip bounced.

When fishing the new variation of the Wolf River Rig, I drop it down until the jig hits the bottom. Then I lift it up 6 inches to a foot, letting it drop

again to the bottom. Usually fish hit it relatively aggressively, but sometimes if they are sluggish, all I feel is weight. Anytime I feel something different I set the hook.

Although I am primarily fishing for walleyes and sauger, I have caught a wide variety of fish with my three-way rig: sturgeon, catfish and almost everything you find in the river. Once or twice a season, I even catch two fish at the same time. Even if they are small fish, together they put up quite a battle.

This variation of the Wolf River Rig doubles your chances of catching fish. Over the course of a season on the river I find the single hook gets more fish some days and other times the jig catches more fish. You literally have two different presentations with one rig.

Making a change to the Wolf River Rig does not alter the simplicity or effectiveness of this classic three-way rig; it makes it even better. 

Mike Yurk has published more than 600 articles in national and regional outdoor publications. He has published five books on outdoor subjects. He is a retired Army officer and lives in Hudson, Wisconsin. Contact Mike at [bassinmajor@yahoo.com](mailto:bassinmajor@yahoo.com).

TOM CARPENTER

## Badger Birds

### White-breasted nuthatch


With its handsome blue-gray topcoat, black cap, bright eyes, creamy belly and chestnut wash below the tail, the white-breasted nuthatch is one of Wisconsin's most subtly handsome birds. Add to that a distinctive call and the magnificent adaptation of being able to work a tree trunk from the top down, and the nuthatch is surely a bird worthy of our respect and admiration. White-breasted nuthatches make Wisconsin home year-round.

**Listen** for nuthatches' distinctive and nasal *yank-yank-yank* calls in the tree-tops. The song is a simple series of low *whi-whi-whi* notes.

**Look** for white-breasted nuthatches in mixed groups of chickadees, creepers and woodpeckers. The different species can hang together because each works a different part of a tree. Nuthatches use their narrow, slightly upturned bills to probe deep bark crevices for insects, larvae and bug eggs.



**Feed** white-breasted nuthatches suet in a hanging basket. Save the fat when you butcher a deer next fall. Nuthatches absolutely love the "real thing." Hanging feeders filled with sunflower seed attract nuthatches, too.

**Did you know** that male white-breasted nuthatches sport darker caps (almost black) compared to females' dark blue or gray caps? 

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



TOM LUBA

## A Game Plan For Spring Largemouth

### *A one-two punch for spring bass*

Spring gets the press for best bassin'. But with a lot of cold water to warm, the season can be hectic. Quickly-warming water into the 50s starts pushing the action, but nasty spring fronts can stop it cold.

To plan for these conditions, speed is a primary concern. It pays to have confidence in a bait that runs fast and one or more that run slow.

The first time I saw a spring bass take a Rat-L-Trap was at the beginning of April, which is still pretty chilly in the upper Midwest. We saw a fish break the surface at the back of a small lake channel. My brother heaved a Trap about a half block. Three reel cranks later, he was fast to a 4 ½-pound largemouth. The fish was aggressive early, so it could have been the splash, flash of the body, or the boatload of rattles inside the Trap. Regardless, there was absolutely no indecision on the part of the bass to take it.

The Rat-L-Trap is a great search bait

no matter the season. When the water starts warming, I use it to find fish that are starting to move and cover a lot of area. Chrome and black are good spring colors, as is sunfish.

The nice feature of the Rat-L-Trap is that, unlike lipped cranks, you can use it through the entire water column. Lipped baits are restricted by their lip as far as depth. Traps can be worked shallow, deep or even hopped off bottom like a jig.

Once you have an idea of where the bass are, you can slow down. Warming water calls nesters, which will spawn in the mid-60s. Usually, inside weed edges, logs, stumps and brush are productive spawning sites, as bass like to nest near something to provide cover once the eggs hatch.

This is where jigs shine. Use a ¼- or 3/8-ounce silicone skirt jig. Black and blue is a good choice. Green pumpkin or watermelon seed are respectable seconds. It also pays to have smaller

3/16- or 1/8-ounce baits since they work during weather setbacks. When fishing for an extended period with a jig, a number 11 Uncle Josh pork frog works well. Drop down to a 101 spin frog or a smaller Paca Craw, which is more like a plastic chunk, with the micro jigs. For plastics, Berkley's 3- or 4-inch Chigger Craw is a decent trailer. You can shorten the tail areas to make it more compact. I like scent in the colder water and presoak pork in a craw scent. Bang crawfish scent also works well.

If you miss a pick up on a jig, also have a Texas rigged 5-inch black with blue flake Senko on a 3/0 Gamakatsu wide gap worm hook ready. Senkos are a great bait to toss back if you miss a bite. With their seductive fall rate, they fit nicely between fast and slow. You can work larger areas as well as inside and outside weedlines with them, too. I add scent to them if I'm not getting bit as-is.

Due to varying water temps, spring bassin' can be erratic. But once the water



**Use a Rat-L-Trap to find spring bass once the water starts warming. The Trap is a great search bait all year long.**

warms, you do have a chance at those big mamas that are coming up to spawn. That's what drives the early season. The big fish aren't shallow long. So get out, plan your approach and tweak that plan as you go. *W*

*Tom Luba is a freelance outdoor writer and bass fishing fan from New London, Wisconsin. Tom fishes as much as he can and never gets tired of setting the hook.*

JOHN LUTHENS

## An Ounce Of An Opener

### *Winter trout adventure in Bayfield County*

We busted through a drift and slid sideways onto a logging road. The Bayfield County landscape was blinding white and the jack pines were capped to the gills in snow. The map bounced out of my hand, and the dog lowered herself deeper in the back seat and whined. It was the first day of Wisconsin's catch-and-release trout season and we were plowing into uncharted territory.

If I'd calculated history correctly, it was the earliest trout opener on record. I was becoming buried in a historic moment. My son had recently gotten his temporary license permit and was driving the truck. It was another historic moment: the first time I wasn't white-knuckling the wheel while goose-chasing a northern Wisconsin trout stream.

I peered at the surrounding forest. Puffs of snow blew from the pines and exploded on the windshield. I'd been here before on summer pilgrimages, but



**John Luthens fishes the first open waters of a new season in Bayfield County.**

everything looked so different in the snow. We may as well have been navigating into Siberia.

I was still looking perplexed when my son, continuing to drive as admirably as an ice-road trucker, pointed out that I was holding the map upside down. Even the dog laughed. I regained my bearings, pointed left and right another half-dozen times, and we finally slid across a small bridge and came to rest on the snowy banks of the Ounce River.

The Ounce River flows across the Douglas and Bayfield County line. It is hidden in a tangled bog on the edge of northwest Wisconsin's Pine Barrens. There are no well-traveled routes or fisherman's parking lots. It is one of those trout spots that take a little exploring to find.

It was a rumor that first took me to the Ounce many years ago. There was a mounted brook trout in a small-town



WAYNE MORGENTHALER

# Time To Get Those Waders Out For Some Early Trout Fishing

## Southwest Wisconsin home of some tremendous streams

Once April 1 comes around, it's time to get that fly fishing rod or ultra-light reel out of the moth balls and into the brisk outdoors. The season usually opens in March but life is still a little bit cold. What better place to start than Southwest Wisconsin, home to the hills and valleys of countless trout streams? This area is an easy drive from most parts of the state and usually not more than two to four hours away from major cities.

Before any trip I suggest you do some homework to make life easier and have a fun expedition. Read the DNR trout fishing regulations, as they seem to be constantly changing. The big thing is to use barbless hooks and everything is catch and release. Richland, Vernon and Crawford counties provide endless miles of bubbling streams meandering through the valleys just waiting for that trout fisherman to set those first steps in the clear cool spring-fed waters.

Deciding where to fish usually takes a little effort. First, obtain a trout stamp along with your inland fishing license and don't forget the trout pamphlet that shows all the streams in Wisconsin. Take the time to access the DNR website for trout maps. Try to click on aerial views, which are usually available at the top of a map. You will be able to evaluate locations better.

I also like to Google "DNR Wisconsin trout stockings." Select a county and a stream and you will be able to see the history of trout stockings for that particular stream. I feel that streams that have been steadily maintained or stocked make for better fishing.

Look up county maps that show all roads for the locations you want to fish. I Google "Richland County



Bringing in a brookie.




Beautiful colors of a brook trout.

**Fish Like A Pro.**  
OnWisconsinOutdoors.com/WisconsinFishing

Wisconsin land information" and look for GIS maps. Make sure you select an aerial view, as it gives you a better picture of the area. Another good choice is Google Earth, and where it says "direction" in the upper left put in a zip code and hit enter. This will zoom you in for a closer look. Once in Google Earth you will notice as you run the mouse over the locations in the lower right that there will be coordinates. You can enter those coordinates into your Smartphone or Garmin.

For some nice fishing, I like to select the mouth of small streams that enter into the bigger streams. These are good early locations for large trout, as the food supply from the runoff seems more abundant. I do fly fish but like to use the ultra-light set up with a Panther Martin. My favorite color at any time of the year is the size larger than the smallest they offer in green and yellow. I do not use a swivel and prefer 4-pound test. I always attack upstream with most casts angled near the stream banks.

Pools located at the end of a nice ripple usually produce decent trout action. I like to use a net to land the fish and a small pair of forceps to remove the hook. Handle the fish as little as possible and return to the water quickly.

Just wading in a cool stream listening to the gurgling waters and the sounds of nature can release the stresses of everyday life. 

Wayne Morgenthaler has fished southwestern Wisconsin for the past 45 years. He has written outdoor articles for MidWest News' website under the name Little Bobber. A retired high school teacher and coach, Wayne is married with three children.

MOERICKE, from page 15

Ice fishing is the ultimate beer drinking forum. The action is usually slow paced and your beer, wherever you set it down, always stays cold.

Slip bobber fishing is a close second to ice fishing since you're just sitting there waiting for a bobber to go down. Plenty of time to crack a cold one and maybe even snack on a venison stick. In Wisconsin we're allowed to fish with three lines. Throwing three slip bobber rigs out is an effective way to search for hungry crappies or walleyes, but if the fish start biting really fast—to the point where you don't have time to drink your beer—you can always cut back to two lines or even one.

**Fish Cleaning:** At GWA everybody on fish cleaning detail has a cold Leinie's in hand. Generally, once cleaning is underway a "beer break" is declared every five or six fish to allow for a sip of liquid gold to avoid dehydra-

tion. Thirst is a dangerous thing.


**The Fish Fry:** There's one more phase of fishing where beer plays an important role—it's a Friday night ritual here "up north"—the fish fry! (I'm pretty sure that it's actually state law that beer be involved.)

We love to cook our fish in a deep fryer. Use good quality oil heated to 340 degrees. Drop in your beer battered filets for a couple of minutes and you've got golden brown heaven on a plate. Consuming a beer or two during the cooking and another while eating is standard (again, also probably state law).

**The Campfire:** A cold beer around the campfire to cap off a day of rod bending allows the memories to be savored and the fish that were caught to get bigger. (Fishermen lie, you know).

It's amazing how critical beer is to every phase of fishing, from planning to catching to cleaning to the last

golden filet dipped in tartar sauce. Fishing and beer ... what a great combination!

So enjoy (in moderation, of course)! And leave the Northwoods cleaner than you found it. If you brought it with you on the water, take it along with you when you leave. Just sayin'. 

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

**Wisconsin Fishing Reports.**

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grocery store that was of eye-popping proportion. It was purple-backed and fat and went a foot and a half. The tarnished copper plate on the bottom stated two simple words: Ounce River.

As far as rumors go, this one was a whopper. I never actually set eyes on the mounted trout. It was related to me by my father, who couldn't remember the location of the store where he'd seen it. This was not surprising. He spent half his life trying to remember where he'd left his car keys and the other half trying to recall where he'd set his eyeglasses.

My father always remembered where he'd left his fly rod, though, and I have to admit he knew what a brook trout looked like. Heaven knows he gloatingly dangled more than his share in front of me over the years. Dangled his share of rumors, too, which, in abbreviated form—leaving out the miles of dead-end logging roads and miles of death marches through unforgiving brush—is pretty much how I found the place.

"Nice driving," I patted my son's shoulder. "Your grandpa would be proud."

"Where's the stream?"

"It's just on the other side of that alder brush thicket."

"Where's the alder brush thicket?"

"It's buried under a little snow."

"Looks like it's buried beneath a nuclear winter," said my son. "Grandpa is looking down right now and laughing his butt off."


"It's your grandpa's fault that we're here in the first place," I answered. "It's opening day. Let's tunnel in and have at it!"

The Ounce River in summer is a dandy brook trout stream. Once you swat through the brush and find water, there are deep bends and logs and swirling riffles. I'd imagine it is still a dandy brook trout stream in winter. But flows of ice had covered most of the deep holes. It cracked beneath my weight like cheap plywood.

My fly line bellied against jagged flows. I used a scud pattern, designed to mimic freshwater shrimp. Doubtless there were fish, but they were obviously not shrimp eaters. Dynamite technically falls into the artificial lure category, but I was fresh out. Didn't matter; even a charged blast wouldn't have broken all the ice.

We let the dog run and followed on our bellies through the snow brush. I only lost one fly. The dog tangled up in my leader and ratcheted off about a quarter-mile of line. Thankfully, the fly didn't end up stuck in the dog. I couldn't have properly explained that one to the veterinarian.

At the end of the day it would have been difficult to tell us apart from the snow-capped balsams that dotted the upper reaches of the river valley. I was glad we'd brought the dog. We might not have found our way back to the truck without her.

Zero trout caught, but my father would have spun it like this: "An ounce of an opener, but easily the best trip of the season." 

John Luthens is a freelance writer from Grafton, Wisconsin. His first novel, *Taconite Creek*, is available on Amazon or at [cablepublishing.com](http://cablepublishing.com), or by contacting the author at [luthens@hotmail.com](mailto:luthens@hotmail.com).

**WILLIAM KENDY**

## Roughing It In Comfort

### Designing a camping sleep system

If you are a tent camper and sleep on a pad in a bag, here are some tips for more comfortable rest.

Don't cobble together your sleep system. Integrate a sleeping pad, bag and liner to make sure each component matches up with and enhances the others.

If you mostly camp in the spring, fall or even winter, place more emphasis on warmth than if you're a summer camper.

The Sleeping Base Layer: Pads and Mattresses

Sleeping pads come in three styles: air construction, self-inflating and closed cell foam. Air construction pads have open core construction and are inflated



**Mountain Hardware's Men's Lamina™ 20 (Regular) sleeping bag is a water repellent, durable 20-degree temperature rated synthetic bag. It features Lamina construction to enhance loft, eliminate cold spots and wick moisture.**

manually. Self-inflating mattresses have open cell foam layers that allow them to inflate and expand automatically when the air valve is opened.

Foam pads are made from dense foam filled with small closed air cells. Unlike inflatable pads, they can't be adjusted for comfort but do insulate.

Size, Thickness and Insulation

Buy for your size and shape. The thicker the pad the more comfortable it is.

In terms of insulation, most air construction pads don't have much to offer. Self-inflating and foam pads have the capability of warming up from your body heat and will better insulate you from the cold.

Sleeping pad insulation is measured in "R-values," which defines how well pads resist the outward flow of heat. The higher the R-value the warmer the pad will feel. R-values between 2 and 3 are good for warmer or moderate weather. R-values of 4 - 5 or above will work in colder weather and winter.

Sleeping Bags

Sleeping bags provide warmth by trapping and warming "dead air" next to your body and provide a barrier between you and the cold. The less air space to heat the quicker it warms and the longer you stay warm.

Rectangular bags are comfortable and roomy. Two bags can be zipped together to make one large bag.

Semi-rectangular bags are a little tapered in the foot area and provide more warmth than full rectangular bags because there is less air to warm.

Mummy bags feature a narrower shoulder area and



**The rectangular Eureka Lone Pine sleeping features Insulcore HQ synthetic insulation and an insulated hood. It has a full-length zipper locking #5, full-length draft tube, and is available in temperature ratings from 0° to 40° F.**

are tapered down to the feet. They are efficient and light but are the most restrictive.

Insulation: What's Inside Your Sleeping Bag?

Most sleeping bag insulation consists of natural fibers, synthetic, goose down or water resistant down. Natural fiber consists of cotton/flannel blends and is warm and comfy if kept dry. Synthetic insulation, primarily made of polyester or blends, is price friendly, provides warmth even if wet, dries quickly and is non-allergenic. Goose down is warm, lightweight and compresses well. Down loses most of its insulation capabilities if it gets wet and is higher priced. Manufacturers are offering bags with water resistant treated goose down, but it comes with a higher price tag.

Temperature Ratings


Some bag manufacturers post their own ratings and others use the international EN Standard Temperature Rating system. Whether rated by a manufacturer or the EN, a rating of 30 degrees means if you have a standard metabolism, you can expect to be comfortable if the temperature is above 30 degrees. What you wear affects the warmth and that level differs by gender.

Accepted industry temperature rating range for colder weather camping is from 10 to 30 degrees. If the weather warms up, you can always unzip the bag. Winter camping calls for lower temperature bags in the 0 degree and below range. With that warmth comes more bulk and weight.

It is recommended that you choose a bag with a little bit colder rating than you expect to experience. Keep in mind that damp weather may make you feel colder.

Sleeping Bag Liners

Sleeping bag liners reduce wear, keep your bag clean and can add warmth, stretching your bag's utility. An additional benefit of having a liner is if you are camping and it suddenly turns warm, you can ditch the bag and sleep in the liner.

Liners come in all shapes, sizes and construction. Sea-to-Summit and other companies offer a broad platform of liners ranging from silk to thermal. 

Bill Kendy is a professional freelance business writer, consultant and speaker who is heavily involved in the firearm and outdoor industries. He is a lifelong hunter, shooter, fisherman and camper.



BEN GRUBER

# Beating The Freeze

## *A beautiful day trip to the Apostle Island ice caves*

Last winter my wife and I made the short trip from central Wisconsin up to Bayfield with our 15-month old daughter, Addy. The ice caves at the Apostle Island National Lakeshore are an absolute treasure. With a little pre-planning, despite the cold, it was a fantastic family outing. We packed our warmest clothes and boots, some ice cleats and my trusty baby backpack and headed up Highway 13 near Bayfield.

It was a cold and windy hike to get to the caves, but once we got there we were out of the wind and the sun's warmth reflected off of the walls of the caves, making it very enjoyable. There was no shortage of people, but we never felt crowded at the caves. Everyone was pleasant and polite, and to my surprise many people stopped and complimented us for exposing our little one to nature's beauty at a young age. Not

one negative comment was heard for us bringing her out there. At 15 months old, Addy enjoyed pointing out the "pretty" ice formations. Below zero wind chills did not stop us from enjoying the outdoors! A burger and coffee at one of the many restaurants in Bayfield on the way out filled our bellies for the drive home.

As more people become aware of the natural beauty here, it can get crowded fast. On the weekends it is a good idea to arrive early, as parking can go for miles along Highway 13 near the Meyers Beach access point. Be ready to walk. Once you reach the shore of the lake, it is just over one mile to the ice caves. Good boots with ice cleats are a must; the ice is often snow-free, making for slippery travel. A few other items to pack are a camera, thermos with a hot drink, and some snacks to enjoy on the


ice. Once you get to the caves you will want to spend some time there exploring all of the beautiful nooks and crannies.

It can be intimidating to haul a toddler out on winter excursions, but don't let that stop you. Just a little pre-planning can make for a fun family outing in the dead of winter's grip. Obviously, dressing well is important. There are a few other tricks that will help keep the little ones warm and happy. Don't forget the sunscreen. The sun's reflecting off the snow and ice can cause sunburn even in winter. The wind out on Lake Superior is going to blow even when it seems calm inland. To keep a toddler's sensitive skin from getting wind-burned, wipe some petroleum jelly on their cheeks and exposed skin before heading out. Walking will be pretty tough for them on the ice, so I carried

Addy in a baby backpack until we got out there. Then she got out and had a blast running around.

Also important is to remember to stay hydrated. Winter air is very dry, and simply breathing saps your body of water as your body humidifies the air as you breathe. This is especially important to remember with kids. Keep them drinking water.

Take those kids outside and enjoy our beautiful state!

Ice conditions at this time do not allow safe access to the sea caves. More info can be found at [nps.gov/apis/mainland-caves-winter.htm](http://nps.gov/apis/mainland-caves-winter.htm). 

*Ben Gruber lives on a hobby farm in central Wisconsin. He has a passion for enjoying all Wisconsin outdoors has to offer with his family and introducing kids to the great outdoors. He is Vice President of Kids and Mentors Outdoors, or KAMO.*

KRIS NEILSON

# The Passionate Storytellers

## *The making of an outdoorswoman, part one*

Twelve years ago I was the least likely person I knew to fish and hunt. I had an irrational fear of water when I couldn't see the bottom and was afraid of being in the woods by myself, let alone in the dark.

I didn't grow up in a family of outdoorsmen nor marry into one. Our meat came from a meat market. The thought of fileting a fish or field dressing an animal was foreign to me. I never thought I could kill an animal or even shoot a gun. I had never eaten freshly-caught fish or any wild game. The closest I had come was eating duck. My outdoor life was swimming, cycling, soccer, running, and occasionally camping.

In 2004, I began working for Wollersheim Winery in Prairie du Sac. It sits on the side of a bluff overlooking the Wisconsin River on 25 acres of vineyard. It is a meticulously manicured landscape of breathtaking beauty and one of the best places I've ever worked. The winemaker, Philippe Coquard, is not only a passionate winemaker and family man, but he

also loves to hunt and tell stories.

I remember Philippe announcing when the big turkeys would strut through the vineyard and getting excited for the hunt each spring. He spent time off during the peak of winemaking season each fall in the vineyard for bow hunting and again during gun season. It was the first time in my life I had witnessed hunting firsthand. Phillipe encompassed every bit of the beauty of nature, the bounty of the harvest, and wildlife conservation into his stories of his hunt, and I became curious. His stories were filled with excitement, humor and passion. It was impossible not to be interested.

After I left the winery, I went to work at a diamond store. I wore fancy dresses, high heels, painted nails and worked with three men whom I spent hundreds of hours with talking about fishing and hunting in between customers buying jewelry. It was then that my curiosity developed into a full-blown interest in becoming an outdoorswoman.

My co-workers' stories were captivat-


ing, their experiences colorfully descriptive. I didn't know anybody who could talk about anything with that much passion, and the way they brought it to life piqued my interest all the more. They took me shopping for my first camo and shotgun and took me on my first turkey hunt where I field dressed my first bird. They mentored my first deer hunt and even were there to help me move my camper onto the hunting land I bought in 2012. They gave me a list of what I needed for my first tackle box and were ecstatic when they saw the picture of the first fish I ever caught. These men were the reason I eventually came to own a musky lure business. Their passion hooked me; their stories hit home in my heart.

Passion is powerful. Being a storyteller is an art. Being a passionate storyteller is a gift. It drew me into the outdoors where I found a purpose and a goal for the first time.

I was one of the least likely people I knew to become an outdoorswoman. My friends and family say otherwise. I



*A Northern Wisconsin musky on a memorable 2015 spring day with fishing guide Jeff Van Remortel.*

don't consider myself one yet. I have a long way to go and a lot to learn. But I am passionate in my pursuit to become one and in becoming a better storyteller, too. 

*Kris Neilson is the former owner of Nauti Lures and has just started Miss Guided Adventures, directing people to the best resources in fishing and other outdoor experiences. She lives in Wausau with her dog, Harry.*



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[thermal.com](http://thermal.com)



### STEEL WILL KNIVES: FERVOR 1201

Some things are so beautiful, it's love at first sight: my wife, the new Beretta M9A3, and the Fervor 1201 from Steel Will knives. From the 3D machine-milled Micarta handle, to the full tang black ASPIS coated dagger blade, to the handmade Italian leather sheath. Don't let the good looks fool you—it's a killer pig sticker. The steel is N690Co, an Austrian steel similar to 440C except tougher. It has a blade-HRC of 58 to 60. It's 11.81 inches long, with a blade length of 6.69 inches, a blade thickness of .22 inches, and it weighs 8.16 ounces. \$319. OWO tested and recommended.

[steelwillknives.com](http://steelwillknives.com)

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### VMC: GLIDING JIG

Designed for deep and shallow water, the Gliding Jig is available in two styles: Oklahoma blade and Willow blade. The Willow style finesses fish with a fast side-to-side flashing action, while the Oklahoma uses a slow side-to-side fluttering action. The versatile bait features a 1/9 VMC Extra Wide Gap Hook and a fine-wire double hook bait keeper. It comes in two durable finishes: the Oklahoma style has an Antique finish, and the Willow style uses an Antique White finish. Available in 1/8 and 3/16 ounce. Two per pack. \$6.99

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### RAPALA: SHADOW RAP

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[rapala.com](http://rapala.com)

# County Teasers

Is this the year you upgrade that old fishing gear? Stop on your way back from the Sport Show in Milwaukee and try out that new fishing gear you got. Or check out the marina and its easy access to the downtown for your next charter adventure. **Click on Ozaukee County.**

Kick off fishing opener at the Wisconsin Opener Fishing & Outdoor Expo on Friday, May 6th from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Heartwood Conference Center & Retreat in Trego. Enjoy fishing and outdoor seminars, vendors, product demonstrations and much more! Details of the event can be found on our events page. **Click on Washburn County.**

Explore over 6,000 acres of public land to snowshoe and ski. Bring your snowmobile up for 300 miles of groomed trails. Sparta has a ski/tubing hill. Ice fishing is good. Enjoy the local shopping, dining, and friendly relaxing times. Sparta—a choice destination in western Wisconsin. **Click on Monroe County.**

Fun time in Ferryville on the Mississippi River. Ice fishing at De Soto Bay is great. Perch, crappies, some northerns. There is still ice fishing in the area with access at Ferryville and from

the bank just north of the Village limits. Ferryville Eagle Day celebration is March 5 from 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. at Village Hall. Hooting Contest at noon with medals and trophies! Spring is coming and hunting/fishing season with it. **Click on Crawford County.**

Visitors and locals alike love the short but sweet smelt season on Chequamegon Bay. The “smelt run” typically starts around the third week in April, shortly after ice-out on the bay, and lasts only 12-14 days. There will be a smelt hotline during the month of April. Call 800.284.9484 or **click on Ashland County.**

Join us in the Minocqua area – Nature's Original Water Park™. With thousands of lakes, rivers and streams, plus hundreds of miles of trails, there is plenty to do year-round. Find out why we were named the “5th Best Fishing Town in America” by Field & Stream. **Click on Oneida County.**



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STUART WILKERSON

# From Start To Finish

## *Golden Eagle Log Homes begin with logs and end in proud owners' homes*

Few people would be happy to have busloads of individuals show up at their homes and tour them inside and out. Not so for Golden Eagle Log Homes owners. Many of them embrace the opportunity to display and discuss their homes with others. In fact, according to company co-owner Tod Parmeter, "If we don't ask them to feature their homes during the Log Home tour, sometimes they call and ask why not and then volunteer." The reason? "Pride of ownership," Tod explained. "They are very satisfied with their Golden Eagle Log Home and want to share their homes and experience with others."

Twice a year Golden Eagle Log Homes features a seminar, manufacturing demonstration, and tour of several homes in the Wisconsin Rapids area and other areas throughout Wisconsin. Participants complete the seminar with a thorough understanding of how Golden Eagle Log Homes are designed, manufactured and constructed. Because Golden Eagle manufactures full log, half log and exposed beam and timber frame type homes, they try to provide samples of each during the tour to their customers. The tour I was on was by motor coach, and the autumn view was spectacular.

Golden Eagle Log Homes will celebrate its Golden Anniversary in 2016. Founded by Wally and Marlace Parmeter in 1966, the firm got its start constructing conventional homes in the Wisconsin Rapids area. So impressive was their first cabin it was not long before other log cabin enthusiasts approached the Parmeters to build them a log home.

Jay and Tod took over the family business in 1996. "That's when things took off," Marlace said. "The boys were a lot braver than we were and willing to take more risks. They really expanded the business." Their hard work paid off. Today, Golden Eagle manufactures 100 homes annually and is one of the most respected log home manufacturers in the United States and Canada.

Unlike many log home manufacturers, Golden Eagle does not simply ship off a pile of logs to the construction site and say, "See ya." They work closely with



*Tour participants admire a house built by Golden Eagle Log Homes. Owners are so satisfied and proud of their Golden Eagle homes that they volunteer to include them on the tour.*

a network of home construction companies familiar with local codes and regulations to ensure that their log homes are built well and engineered to code. "Building codes vary widely from state to state," Jay noted. "In the Milwaukee area, for instance, the snow load for a roof may be 30 pounds per square foot. In Colorado, up in the mountains it may be as high as 200 pounds. Customers buying from us can be sure that their cabin will be engineered and designed correctly to meet national and local building codes and pass inspection."

Golden Eagle remains a family business. Tod's wife, Sharon, and their daughter, Laura, head the accounting department. Son Zachary is now learning the business from the ground up by working in every department. "He has improved every department that he has worked with," Tod said, and there is a lot to learn. Golden Eagle does not farm out any of its log products. Nothing leaves the 23-acre manufacturing site in Wisconsin Rapids that has not been thoroughly inspected, graded and approved by a Golden Eagle expert.

There is much more than quality logs that make Golden Eagle Log Homes so desirable. Tod noted that the company has on-site design experts specializing in home design, kitchens, colors, materials, and more. Buyers can pick a home

from hundreds of pre-designed plans or bring their dream home to reality with the help of a Golden Eagle expert. Over the years Golden Eagle and the Parmeter family have helped over 5000 homeowners realize their dream of log home ownership. Jay said, "Many of the homes we sell fall into the \$250,000 - \$450,000 price range," but, he added, each year they sell some smaller ones and some much larger multi-million dollar homes.

According to Zachary, one of the factors that separate Golden Eagle from other log home manufacturers is their logs. "Most manufacturers use air-dried logs; ours are kiln dried," Zachary told tour participants. "Kiln-dried logs are much more energy efficient because the drying process leaves them far less porous. Our logs have a moisture content ranging from 15 to 20 percent, depending upon the type of wood, compared to as much as 50 percent in an air-dried log."

Other benefits of kiln-dried logs, according to Zachary, are that they are lighter, far more stable and less susceptible to shifting, more energy efficient, and dry enough to stain immediately. Companies that don't kiln-dry their logs usually need to hold off on staining or finishing the log home for several years. With Golden Eagle's Kiln Dried Logs your home is stained and finished before



*Golden Eagle logs are lighter, stronger and insect-free because they are kiln dried.*

you move in.

Debbie Guy from De Soto, Wisconsin, said she gained an immense amount of information by taking the Golden Eagle Log Home Tour in Wisconsin Rapids. She was one of nearly 100 participants who took advantage of the opportunity late in September. Asked what she thought of the tour, Debbie responded, "I think it's amazing how well we've been treated, and the accommodations are great. I'm coming away with much more information than I could have imagined." She was especially impressed with how closely Golden Eagle works with its customers through every phase of design, manufacture and construction. "I can definitely recommend the tour to anyone thinking about building a log home," she said.

Jim Quinn, whose home was part of the tour, highly recommends Golden Eagle Log Homes. His was built in 2006 and he is very satisfied with the results. "You can't beat the style and look of a log home," he explained. "I like the look of real wood, and working with Golden Eagle was a great experience. I've recommended them to others and will again."

For more information on Golden Eagle Log Homes, see their website at [goldeneagleloghomes.com](http://goldeneagleloghomes.com).

*Stuart Wilkerson is a longtime OWO contributor, award-winning Wisconsin journalist, and firearms expert specializing in historical firearms and collecting.*





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DENNY MURAWSKA

## The Brush Buster

### Portrait of memories

Many well-meaning souls have counseled me not to live in the past. I pretty much ignore most of what they say. The past defines who we are, where we have been and how we came to live in the present. So it is with painted images.

In my home I have many original paintings from family members. Several of those closest to my heart were painted by my father. As a child I remember a wooden box full of tubes of oil paints, linseed oil and brushes. The smells I recall are as fresh as they were when I watched Dad sketching on a canvas, then applying the pigments that brought outdoor scenes to life. He was not a trained painter, yet his knowledge of flushing birds allowed him to portray moments in time that we shared. I tried to copy what he did. Mallard ducks were a favorite subject. I still have some drawings I made as a young child based on intently watching Dad sketch them out.

One painting stands out from the others: a flushing covey of quail. The scene is a reminder of many days of hunting

the hilly bluffs near Morrison, Illinois. These were days when quail were abundant and our pointing dogs could locate four or five coveys each day. Those of us who lived those days cannot forget the heart-pounding excitement generated by the whirr of wingbeats rocketing out from dense brush. While I engage in many types of hunting and fishing, nothing comes close to the exuberant, startled, pure thrill of busting a covey.

Nowadays, the hedgerows of multiflora rose and briar-filled valleys have been cleared out for the most part. The quail are not present in any great numbers. The farm we hunted for generations has been sold. My father is 87 years old, saddled with knees that will not allow him to roam these hills anymore. He has already handed me his Browning shotgun that downed so many birds, knowing he cannot walk those hills and gullies anymore. He used to be the brush buster, burrowing through the gnarliest brambles with his leather-faced pants to kick out the stubborn single birds. He would root around places even our pointers



*Bobwhite explosion as Dad remembered it.*

would shy away from. I generally took the easier path, waiting for a shot opportunity after Dad did the dirty work.

No, I cannot live in “mindful” meditation locked into the present moment. More often than not I gaze at old pictures and paintings of times gone by. I am not a Buddhist monk. I am a hunter. I enjoy shooting game, cooking it and eating it. There is a spiritual aspect of taking this wildness into my own body. Someday I can only hope my ashes will

feed the plants in some special niche of this world where the birds and deer will infuse my molecules into their own and some young hunter will experience the thrills of the hunt and carry on traditions we hold so dear. *W*

*Denny Murawska has been a contributor to the wacky UP Magazine, Wishigan, Verse Wisconsin, and The Pulse. His church is the pine cathedral that surrounds him at his home near Black River Falls.*

TOM CARPENTER

## Google Your Gobbler

### Easy aerial map scouting really puts you on the birds

“Well, I’ve got bad news and good news,” said my landowner friend, Joel, over the phone a few days before my boy Ethan’s spring turkey hunt period. “I’m not seeing turkeys anywhere on my land. But I secured a spot for you down the road that might have some birds now.”

I knew that farm but only in a cursory, drive-by fashion. With the hunting grounds a 45-minute one-way drive away and plenty of work, plus evening activities with the kids, ahead of me, there was no way I could get on the new ground to scout. Solution? Google Maps.

#### Log On and Look

Even if you’re not a computer whiz, Google Maps are easy to use. Go to google.com, enter “google maps,” click on the Google Maps selection, and you’re in. You’ll see a map of the U.S. Click and drag to get Wisconsin more centered in the middle, then alternatively zoom in (using the + and – signs on the map’s lower right side) to home in on the turkey hunting grounds you want to explore.

Use the Maps view to find your general area, but toggle to Earth view (click on the icon in the map’s

lower left) to flip to satellite photography and see the landscape features you need to know to pre-scout and plan your hunt. Scroll around and zoom in and out to explore digitally.

Anybody can master the technology. Google makes it easy. The real fun comes in putting together a game plan for the hunt.

#### What to Look for

The detail of this satellite imagery is beyond amazing. You can identify woods, fields, wetlands, meadows, thickets, abandoned buildings, old farmsteads, streams, ponds, and other macro features. But forest lanes, fenceline gaps, hidden glades, log landings, subtle wrinkles in woodland edges, and even individual trees are all visible as micro features. On one satellite image I can even see a farmer friend’s tractor as he mows hay!

All the macro and micro features mentioned are important to turkey hunters. Here are some specific hotspots to look for in new hunting grounds or on parcels you want to explore more.



*Google Maps is an easy way to pre-scout and start planning a successful hunt, such as the one that produced this gobbler for the author’s son, Ethan.*

*continued on page 30*



NEAL HERRMAN

# Hunting With Champions

## *On the stage and in the field trophies*

To say a lot of people have traveled out of Wisconsin on a turkey hunting trip is an understatement, to say the least. But not many can say they hunted out of state with two Grand National Calling Champions, and that is just what my wife, Colleen, and I did this last spring.

We hunted Nebraska at Cottonwood Hunting lodge with Doug Herman and his daughter, Gracie Herman, age 10 (no relation). Doug won the NWTF gobbling championship in 2014, and Gracie won the NWTF Poults turkey calling division in 2015. Both contests were held in Nashville, TN. We've been family friends for years and finally got a chance to hunt together and chase some of those beautiful white-tipped Merriams in the Sandhills of Nebraska in late May 2015.

The excitement was high. While arriving at camp we were greeted by a flock of 16 jakes on the road, which pushed the excitement level even higher! At turkey camp we would also be sharing our

time with good friends Steve Morgenstern of Hooks Custom Calls and Mike Miller, videographer for Duck Commander and Buck Commander. After settling in, we all took a ride around some of the properties Doug leases. The number of birds was unbelievable.

We separated, with Doug taking Gracie in as the caller and my wife, Colleen, as the shooter to work from a small patch of Cottonwoods. From our own near-by location we could hear a lone tom gobbling, searching for a lonely hen. At this point everyone's anticipation was at an all-time high. As the minutes passed we could hear the trio was set up and Gracie was working her magic. The sound coming out of that Jerry Zebro box call she was making made it obvious why she hoisted the championship trophy above her head just a few months prior in Nashville.

As the minutes ticked by us, we could hear the gobbles of the desperate tom closing in on the trio's location. As any turkey hunter knows, it's those last few


seconds when your heart is racing and the bird is strutting and drumming that will be ingrained forever in your mind. A distant shotgun report told the story. Tom had been seduced into range and fallen not only to the pull of a trigger but to the sweet, seductive calls from a 10 year-old girl just starting to make her mark on the turkey calling world.

The trophy that day was more than Colleen's first-ever white-tipped Merriam tom, more than Gracie's calling in that beautiful bird, and more than Doug's guiding experience. It was the combination of the trio that went into that Cottonwood break and the cheerleaders that had audibly followed each step of the hunt from a distance. The memories that are made when it all comes together on the stage and in the field will last a lifetime.

Many more cherished memories were made on that great trip to Nebraska ... not just of the birds we killed or fish we caught but of all the moments riding around in the truck, sharing meals at



**The trio Gracie Herman, Colleen Herrman, and Doug Herman with Colleen's first Merriams gobbler.**

camp, and just spending time together. In the end, that is the real trophy of any hunting story. 

---

Neal Herrman has been turkey hunting for 17 years. He has harvested birds in seven states and has two grand slams. Neal won calling titles in Wisconsin, Iowa, Minnesota and placed top 15 in the nation. He is on the Hooks Custom Calls pro staff and designed their strikers. Neal is an active member of the NWTF.

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BILL CUNNEA

# Three Great Bird Dog Books

## *Upland hunters' classics*

With the bird season being over, there's time to reflect ... and to read. Three books, which are old friends, help me transition during the days when I'm kept inside by the weather. Two are non-fiction, the other an extremely well-done novel which reads like the story is fact. The main characters (to me, the dogs in the stories) are, respectively, a German Shorthaired Pointer, a Field Springer Spaniel, and a Field English Setter.

"Run, Rainey, Run" is an old friend. It was written by Mel Ellis, then the Outdoor Editor for the Milwaukee Journal and associate Editor of Field & Stream. It was published in 1967 and still can be found on some out-of-print websites. The story centers on Rainey, a remarkable solid liver German Shorthaired Pointer and his owner (but never master), Ellis, who traveled far and wide to get material for his articles and columns. The narrative is not a man bragging about his dog's accomplishments, but rather the development of the relationship of man-dog hunting partners and the required, but wonderfully rewarding, accommodations that Ellis makes.


Rainey is a heart-and-soul dedicated hunting dog, not given to rescuing Timmy from the well, but to finding that bird, be it grouse, sharp-tail, pheasant, or duck. It is

a wonderful journey with man and dog written in a journalist's style: terse, succinct and to the point. When I lived in a metropolitan area, it was the book that carried me away to the life I dreamed of.

"A Rough-Shooting Dog," by Charles Fergus, is the story of buying and training a Field English Springer Spaniel from a puppy through the second year of hunting. Fergus is a skilled writer with an appreciation of the language and a demonstrated knowledge of the environment through which a grouse hunter and his pup wander, traipse, and sometimes, labor. It is much a conversation with the reader; however, this is not a book on training so much as it is an insight into the many considerations and feelings a new owner working with his partner deals with. It is written differently than "Rainey," almost with the care a novelist might take, giving the reader a tangible sense of being there, with the texture of a true hunt situation. This is a book for reading on a winter night with a warm drink and a smoldering fire as you recollect your own hunting experiences. It is a treasure—factual, yet lyrical. It was published in 1995.

"Jenny Willow," a novel by Mike Gaddis, was published in 2002 and is a work of art. It tells the story of an English

Setter and her owner responding to the call of the woods, mountains and valleys in West Virginia. It is, at its core, a story of a grouse hunting setter dog. But as that story unfolds, it brings out the humanity, community, silent regrets, and heart-thumping joys of a well-respected hunter whose shortcomings are such a part of his being that they become part of who he is in the world.

Gaddis goes to the community to bring other personalities into the story, some drama, a bit of danger. But it all circles back to the dog, the pivot point of the story, the lives, the love, and the truly harsh, tender and compulsive living of a very real life. It is wonderfully written. Not the journalist's prose of Ellis, not the contemplative insights of Fergus, but with a driving movement that brings you along to a world you both are familiar with and is yet a strange variation of today's realities. It is yet another treasure. 

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

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DENNY MURAWSKA

## Real Men Wear Pink

### *The new camo*

Forget for just a minute the presidential debates, global warming and world terrorism. It appears Wisconsin is about to be the first state to legalize blaze pink camo. Can the end of civilization be far behind? In a tactical ploy to entice more women to put down the knitting needles and pick up a gun, some clever legislators figured blaze pink would be the ticket. You betcha! Of course, many women hunters are offended by this sexist conspiracy.

I am pretty sure men are not buying into the concept. Imagine sauntering into deer camp with a pickup truck filled appropriately with Leinenkugel's beer wearing pink! While the beer will be appreciated, will old timers buy into the fact that you are also carrying a sequin-embroidered duffel bag full of gear? Do you want to be the Liberace of Land O' Lakes? Imagine Burt Reynolds in the movie "Deliverance" sneaking up on those inbred rascals harassing his camping buddies. Would he wear pink? How about Doc Holliday at the O.K. Corral? (The sight might have caused the cantankerous Clantons to flee in fear.)

But wait! Is this just a bunch of liberals trying to even the playing field of gender issues? It appears that Professor Majid Sarmadi of the University of Wisconsin has determined that, while blaze pink is equally as visible and safe as blaze orange, deer cannot see it as easily. Evidently, deer can see yellows quite well. Blaze orange is chock full of them. Blaze pink is not. Okay, guys. Are you convinced now? Are you running for the hunting catalogs to stock up on pink accessories the moment you get done reading this? Better hit the craft store and spend the winter slack time embroidering hearts, butterflies and rhinestones onto your new garb. You cannot accessorize too much. Pink guns are already the rage, but what about boots and gloves? Keep looking. Next season you need to be prepared.

Of course, you can "swing both ways" and attire yourself in a combination of



*This season's finest hunting attire.*

blaze orange and blaze pink. While it may hint at a gender identity crisis, it will spare you a chunk of change. Your hunting buddies will be scratching their heads at this fashion faux pas. No matter what rationale you give for your idiosyncratic behavior, nobody is going to buy it. Pink camo is a gateway behavior that can lead to the demise of the deer camp. Imagine some dweeb in your camp sitting cross-legged with a wine glass full of pink Zinfandel, pinky finger appropriately extended. Yes, this will be the same fellow who flits around your cabin spritzing the air with Febreeze after every belch and beer fart. After hours, he will sit around primping his nails with pink polish and use a blush tone for face camouflage.

Is this the end of manly hunting as we know it? Will grunt calls of the future sound like Sarah Palin? Will deer decoys become alluring to bored hunters because of the long eyelashes and sexy turn of the head? I hope not. We stand at a crossroads. Will tradition prevail, or are we headed down the one-way road to an apocalypse? *W*

*Denny Murawski has been a contributor to the wacky UP Magazine, Wishigan, Verse Wisconsin, and The Pulse. His church is the pine cathedral that surrounds him at his home near Black River Falls.*

BOB WILSON

## Guiding And The Unexpected Emergency

### *Always be prepared*

What happens when an accident or medical emergency occurs on your boat, miles away from land? Would you want to count on just one person to help you in an emergency situation? Let me give you some tips I employ on every guide trip.

A large group of people arrive at a boat ramp with only one person who can back the vehicle up, put the boat in the water, park the trailer, and drive the boat. This is the case for guides on every trip.

After we are in the boat, I go over a number of safety tips, a 10-minute procedure. I start with the life jacket: where to locate them and how to put them on. (It is surprising how many people do not know this.) Next is the throw-away cushion. Mine is bright yellow with three big, black words: "I Need Help." Other boaters may see the cushion and be able to come to our aid. Next I point out where the battery cases and fire extinguisher are. If a fire happens at a battery compartment or a gas tank has been comprised, the guide or the clients can respond as needed. If I have a medical emergency out on the lake, the clients should know how to start the boat and get us back to land as close as possible. Lastly, I point out where my First Aid kit is and its components.

We are now out on the lake having fun and fishing. Suddenly a medical emergency occurs. In that moment, time stops and panic sets in. You stop what you are doing and think, "What should I do? I do not even know how to do CPR, and I do not have a First Aid kit." That scenario can happen to any inland guide, charter boat captain, or anyone at any given time of day.

Charter boat captains are required to get their licenses before they can become a guide along with taking a CPR and First Aid course. Inland guides do not need a CPR or First Aid course to get a license, so I have to ask, "Is a charter boat captain's clients more important than our clients?" All clients should be treated as friends or family.

A little history on myself. I was certi-

fied as a paramedic in 1976. As a career firefighter/paramedic, I had the best of both worlds: worked 92 days a year and guided Castle Rock and Petenwell Lakes.

My First Aid kit is a basic Johnson & Johnson kit. I have removed and added items based on necessity. On two the inside pockets I have just the basics: bandages, cleaning wipes and burn gel. The main pocket contains the heart of my kit: an ice pack, a mouth barrier used in CPR, three EpiPens, After Bite and other odds and ends. My kit is for me, so you may not need what I have in my kit. Customize a kit to fit your needs and fishing style.

In all my years of fishing and/or guiding, I, as most, have had little things happen in the boat: hook in finger, too much sun, cut myself and so on. For example, late this past March, it was cold outside and I was out with two guys in the river south of Petenwell dam when a medical emergency happened. A client had an allergic reaction to something, so I gave him one of the EpiPens and showed him how to use it. After calling 911, I went to the ramp as fast as 40hp can go. All in all, it turned out very well. The client was okay, and I got two more trips from the two gentlemen.

The point is any of this could happen to any guide on or off the water. This upcoming year, the schools in Wisconsin are going to train the kids in CPR and First Aid. As guides, let's not have our kids know more about safety than we do. Any fire department has CPR classes from time to time, and some have First Aid class as well. Just call your local fire department for any information or questions you may have.

Be safe on the water, and, most of all have fun. *W*

*Bob Wilson has been fishing and guiding Castle Rock and Petenwell Lakes for over 35 years. His guide service focuses on educating and teaching all ages. Contact Gone Fishing Again Guide Service at bobgonefishingagain@yahoo.com or 608.404.1239.*

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MIKE FOSS

# Making A Bear Hunter

## The work starts now

The 2016 Wisconsin bear season is seven months away, but already I'm starting to feel the pressure. With guiding comes a great responsibility not only to my clients but to my inner self. The more intense my effort during the preseason the greater the impact for the tag holder in September. The ongoing standard is 100 percent shot opportunity for every hunter on stand.

In early 2014 I received a call from ex- Major League Baseball player Mike Hart hoping to hunt with me if he drew a tag. The bit of intimidation I initially felt disappeared quickly as our conversation unfolded. Mike is a very experienced and successful Wisconsin deer hunter, but like so many others waiting so long for a first tag, he's also just a regular guy: an inexperienced bear hunter looking for guidance.

He is not looking for the biggest bear in the woods. Mike is looking for a great adventure. These are the type of hunters I love guiding—no experience to rely on but an eagerness to listen and follow directions. I know as the summer months move toward September our field expertise and knowledge of bears will educate even the most novice of hunters and set them up for a successful hunt.

Mike Hart did draw his tag on February 8 after eight years of applying and also declining to hunt in 2015 when the hound hunters had first privilege to hunt. In the On Wisconsin Outdoors issues ahead follow along with Mike and me as a rookie bear hunter seeks to fill a tag on his first black bear hunt.

How does a guide prepare a novice hunter to ultimately reach that goal? Throughout the preseason it's imperative that I stay in constant contact with clients, answering any and every question they might have. There really is no such thing as a dumb question. The hunters will also receive updates, pictures and videos of bears in their natural environment, intended to acclimate the hunter to the animal's size in perspective to the surrounding foliage and bait station. Like any college or school, our curriculum prepares the student for what lies ahead. The better prepared, the better the chance to fill the tag legally and ethically.


Another vitally important responsibility, which isn't mentioned enough in guiding circles, is the maintenance of equipment. Safe, quality equipment can't be compromised. In the 2016 season, those priorities trumped budget constraints. Hunters will again find Rivers Edge Original Big Foot tree stands



Bear guide Mike Foss has reason to smile: all new equipment heading into the 2016 season.

with their large platform for long comfortable sits, new and secure noiseless tree strap attachments, and weight capacity of 300 pounds.

Not only is the stand a great choice for the client, but a bonus feature triggered the sale. I can remove the seat. If you hunt in bear country like Bayfield County, chances are eventually your tree stand seat has received an unwanted visit from those young, mischievous bears. Many times I find my seats chewed up or even completely gone, never to be found again. That Big Foot stand purchase, along with new climbing ladder sticks, trail cameras, otter sled, ATV ramp, and an annual order of Bear Scents on the way is giving this guide a warm and fuzzy on these cold nights still seven months out from the big event.

Out my window the snow is still deep, but memories of past hunts are chasing the cabin fever. New adventures lie just ahead. Like the new hunters, I am anxious for spring. And I am ready. 

Mike Foss was born and raised in Washburn, Wisconsin (Bayfield County). As a professional bear guide he has harvested bear and many deer, including several record book bucks. Off season, Mike is constantly scouting for new hunting areas and adventures. Connect with Mike at 715.373.0344 or at northwiout@att.net.


CARPENTER, from page 27

- Hidden woodland clearings, glades and landings that can serve as strut zones
- Areas of large trees (look for spreading branches) that might hold roosting birds
- Secluded field corners, swales and lobes that turkeys like to feed in early and late in the day
- Fencelines, fence gaps and gates, as well as wooded draws and gullies, that serve as turkey travel funnels
- Stream corridors that offer roosting areas or travel routes
- Obstacles (such as ponds, ditches, old corrals, gravel pits, fenced roadways or lanes) that could stall a tom approaching your setup

Happy Ending

My computer session revealed a seemingly perfect spot: an "inside" corner (L) where a broad, thickety fenceline met some woods. What appeared to be large oak trees occupied an area 100 yards behind and in the forest.

At first light a couple hens landed in the plowed field and started scratching around before wandering off. Soon a gobbler somewhere behind answered my calls. He faded away but another tom started gobbling from the opposite direction. Ethan and I skedaddled to reposition and here came the bird, fairly running across the other field right to us.

We Googled up that gobbler good! 

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



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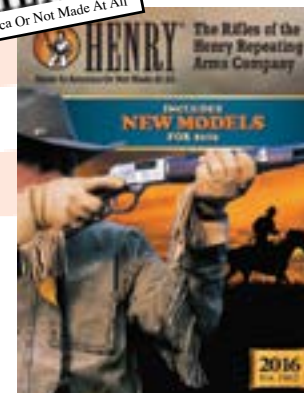
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DICK ELLIS

# On Wisconsin Outdoors

## Tom at 20 yards? Don't count that chicken

**D**o you know why these OWO writers are called the “Ellis Experts”? Well, it kind of rolls off the tongue nicely for one thing, doesn't it? The real answer is that the large majority of our columnists acted as my sources of expertise in hunting or fishing in their own regions of Wisconsin when I traveled the state for 20 years as a syndicated outdoor columnist before launching OWO.

They were the true field experts. I was the writer and photographer. Good thing, too. If I am the one teaching you how to fish, for example, a river walleye run ... we're having burgers for supper. I am, you see, the only non-expert in this circle of Ellis Experts.

The sole exception is turkey calling. On the crest of a new season, let me offer this short bit of advice. It doesn't matter if you can pull the most wary, streetwise Tom 400 yards to your gun if you don't finish it. Your first priority? Know your shotgun and loads and practice physically on the range before you take the field and mentally again and again before you take the shot.

I have brought in gobblers from such great distances that I would not have known they were initially answering without the whispered heads-up from the hunter next to me. I have called in and tagged a 26-pound Tom in season six after a six hour duel that included hundreds of gobbles, belly crawls, nu-



*Dick Ellis called this gobbler in and Chuck Jurcek made a perfect shot in the Waukesha County alfalfa.*

merous chess moves by hunter and bird, and ultimately the kill at 10 yards in the middle of a thorn thicket. I have enticed gobblers in October and the kill on a fall bird that by the books shouldn't have been remotely interested in this “hen” that was seducing him. And, many times, I have worked Tom into a lather of non-stop gobbling at point blank range by screaming at him non-stop the message that he had better come now! All with a mouth diaphragm call.

I have also called in Tom from hundreds of yards, twice in fact, and missed him clean at 20 - 25 yards. And that, including during the 2015 spring season, is a humbling experience for any hunter

who should be walking out with a certain swagger under the weight of Tom on his shoulders. But for an outdoor writer? My post-hunt self-evaluation in a Grant County hard rain is still vivid:

“What a bonehead. And now I have to write about this?”

So practice. It's so much easier than kicking yourself in the rear end in the alfalfa. And then?

Enjoy the swagger. *WO*



*John Ellis whispered that Tom had initially answered a Dick Ellis “scream for attention” from hundreds of yards out in 2011. After a continuous conversation between bird and hunters, John made the kill at 30 yards over a decoy.*

FLORCZAK, from page 4

coves, weedy bays and marshes are other spawning grounds for northerns.

Topographic maps can be used to gather intel before venturing to potential hotspots. They show breaklines, some cribs/structure, shallow water areas and potential pike habitat.

Patterning hungry pike is much easier with a group. You can cover more water in shorter amounts of time. Break down spots by setting a few tip-ups on the shallowest flat. Cut a few holes right on the edge of any drop-offs to see if the big fish are hugging shorelines or moving in from the main lake basin. Weedlines, underwater points and successful locations from previous seasons are other good options.

### Bait

I use a combo of live and dead baits when setting tip-ups. Although pike love live bait, they are also scavengers and prefer easy meals when available. However, every body of water has different tendencies, so give both live and dead bait a chance. From personal experience, dead bait seems to produce less flags but bigger fish.

For live bait we use shiners 4 - 7 inches long but larger if available. Our motto has always been, “Big bait catches big fish.” Red tails and suckers will also work, but shiners seem to be preferred forage in most lakes.

Smelt or ciscos (5 - 8 inches long) work great for dead bait. Be sure to use a quickstrike rig when fishing dead bait to better your odds of hooking up and to ensure the fish survives. Quickstrike rigs consist of two treble hooks: one in the dorsal of the minnow and another behind the head.

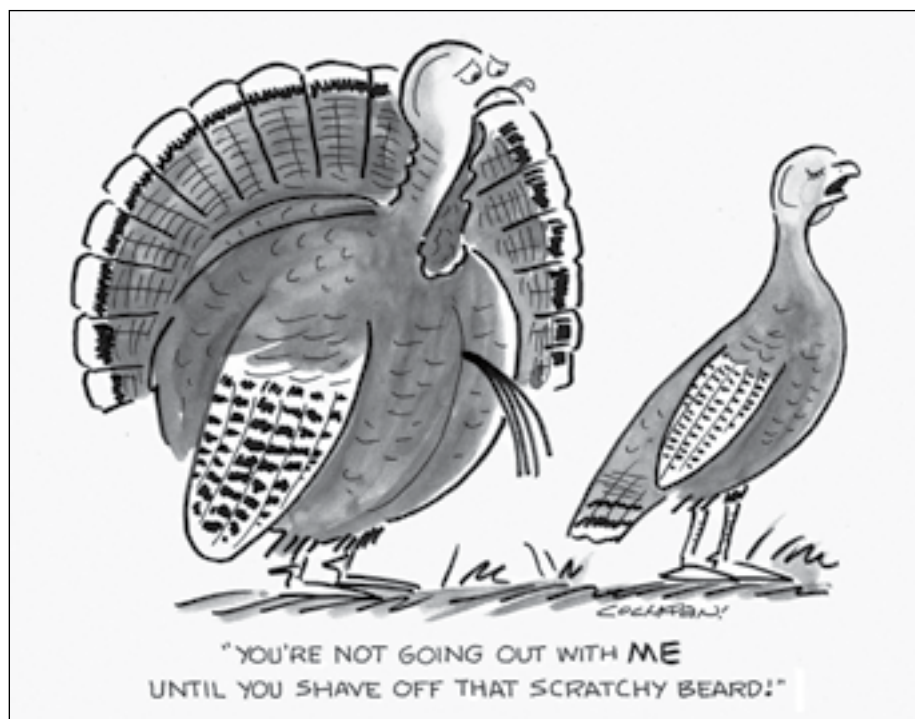
### Trophy Tips: Icing a Giant

Follow the bait fish to find late-winter fish. In waters with a strong panfish forage base, pursue shallow bays or staging areas on the cusp of spawning grounds.

Pike prowl relatively high in the water column. Set some baits 2 - 3 feet below the ice.

Release the breeders. Keep fish 26 - 30 inches to eat, and release fish larger to sustain the population. *WO*

*Tyler Florczak is a sports and outdoors editor for The Chetek Alert newspaper in Chetek. He has been working as a writer, photographer and videographer for more than five years. His 182-inch whitetail buck harvested in 2015 was recently accepted into the Boone & Crockett Club and was featured in Field & Stream, Deer and Deer Hunting and North American Whitetail.*





# Dr. Glad's BIG MOVE

## From Madison to Baraboo

The new spring season brings a new office for Richard Glad, MD. Moving north from Madison, where he's practiced orthopedic surgery for 28 years, Dr. Glad is now accepting patients in Baraboo, Wisconsin as the Chief Medical Director of Orthopedics for Dean & St. Clare. A sportsman himself, Dr. Glad is thrilled to transfer his practice to such a naturally beautiful place. He jokes that his new community already wears his team colors: "Camouflage."

A lover of fishing, hunting, and nature photography, Dr. Glad has a few health tips for the other sportsman in the area:

As you plan, round up your equipment and secure your turkey hunting license this spring, make sure you're also getting your body ready by doing routine conditioning exercises.

***"Hunting can be very stressful and difficult on your body if you aren't in good shape to go out and call a turkey," says Dr. Glad. "Participating in and working on a conditioning program before going out on the hunt is important."***

Dr. Glad suggests packing up your gear, pulling on your boots and heading out for a hike on local trails and hills to get your body back into hunting shape. This will not only help your body acclimate to the movements and strain of being out in the field, but it can also help you identify areas that may need extra attention.

Some things to think about if you notice pain in your hips and knees while conditioning:

- Walking sticks can help to better distribute weight while you are hiking to your ground blind or the game's habitat. These can be particularly helpful in hilly areas.
- For lingering aches and pains, over-the-counter anti-inflammatory medications like acetaminophen or ibuprofen can help manage the symptoms.
- If you suffer from arthritis, but want to stay in the field, ask your doctor about cortisone shots to help manage your pain.
- For hunters with more serious disabilities, special hunt-from-vehicle permits can be obtained.

Once your body is ready and you've chosen the right cover for your hunting trip, Dr. Glad also reminds hunters to be prepared for the weather and weather changes. March in Wisconsin is unpredictable and can bring many challenges.

***"Hypothermia can be a big danger because you are often sitting and not moving,"*** says Dr. Glad. ***"Having quality outdoor wear and gear is important."***

Dr. Glad recommends using hand and toe warmers as an inexpensive way of keeping your extremities warm while out on the hunt. These warmers easily tuck into gloves and boots to provide some warmth and work well in combination with quality hunting gear.

By taking these extra steps to prepare your body and protect against injury, you'll be more likely to head out more often and hunt for the full season.



His healthy hunting tips to prepare your body for a successful season



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FRED SCHAFFHAUSER

# Bringing A Bow To A Gunfight

## Bowhunting spring turkeys

As the sky revealed the morning I found myself just inside the woodline of the field kneeling in sparse cover with bow in hand as several Tom turkeys approached my calling. I can't remember if I started to draw my bow or if I just thought about it, but my presence was sensed, the jig was up, the turkeys were fleeing. It was spring of 1992. My first turkey hunt and I wished I had brought a shotgun.

Over the years since I have taken many turkeys, most with shotgun and a handful now with a bow. A wild turkey is, in my opinion, the most weary game hunt-able in Wisconsin with bow and arrow. I'm not talking about backyard turkeys fed by birdfeeders. I'm talking about the Wisconsin eastern wild turkey hunted in the wild. Their senses, with the exception of smell, are unmatched. Turkeys see color, can detect movement with the precision of an eagle, and can hear a pin drop.

Taking a turkey with bow and arrow takes extra preparation to be successful. All of the normal turkey hunting tech-

niques apply, but there are some additional concerns for the bowhunter. As I found out on my first turkey hunt concealment is key. Not only do we need to be camouflaged completely but we need to conceal our movement. Ground blinds are perfect for that.

The ground blind of choice should be big enough to sit far enough back in the darkness to draw your bow without the tip of the arrow touching the blind wall or sticking out of a window. It needs to be tall enough to account for the top limb recoil of your bow.

We must be able to shoot our bow from a sitting position. Do not take this for granted. If not practiced, there is a good chance you will find it very difficult to draw your bow at the moment of truth, and you might find your upper body is not in the proper position to make an accurate shot. Practice time at the range with your blind seat will let you know if you are prepared. If you have an opportunity to actually practice shooting while in your blind, better yet. It is

important to be able to draw your bow smoothly and easily to avoid extra movement that might be seen, heard or sensed by approaching birds. Consider adjusting your bow weight to accommodate a comfortable draw.


Quiet clothing is a must. If you cannot draw your bow with complete silence, you will blow your opportunity or be shooting at a fleeing Tom at best.

A good system to hold your bow in the blind is a necessity. A bow with a broadhead-tipped arrow is not the easiest weapon to lay in wait. I suggest a bow holder that is driven into the ground that holds the bow pointed in the correct position by the lower limb.

Determine your blind placement based on scouting, putting the birds to sleep, farmers' observations etc. The blind can be set up at the time of the hunt, days or weeks in advance. Brushing in a blind or making it seem part of the landscape doesn't seem to be necessary. Turkeys will approach a blind placed in the open.

Decoys should be placed close to the blind. Often gobblers will hold up a few yards away from a decoy spread. If you place your decoys at a distance you intend to shoot, your trophy might hang up just outside your comfort range.

Use a broadhead that creates a lot of damage. Turkeys are tough birds. The goal is to damage the neck/spine/wing joints. This allows for a quick recovery and immobilizes the turkey so it doesn't fly off and die somewhere unknown. Broadheads designed specifically for headshots are effective if the shot is perfect. I prefer a large expandable. I have killed turkeys with shots placed at the base of the wing joint and spine shots placed as the bird was facing away. I prefer this shot.

It took me years to get my first turkey and many more to kill one with bow and arrow. Bowhunting turkeys is a wonderful challenge and a great excuse to hold your bow in the woods on a spring morning, hearing the spine-tingling gobble of a roasted Tom as you watch the world wake up. 



The author's brother, Rob Schaffhauser, filled his spring turkey tag with a perfect shot on the wing joint with an expandable broadhead.

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TERRY RUSS

## Terry's Coyote Tips

1. It's mating season, so use more howls. Coyotes are more territorial and protective of territories now.
2. A big reason for lack of success is calling where coyotes are not present. Scout areas you plan to hunt. Look for coyote signs: tracks, scat, howls.
3. Make sure you chamber round before you leave your vehicle. A few weeks ago I had a coyote in my sites for an easy 150-yard shot, gun goes "click," chamber another round, gun goes "click" again. I re-chambered five times with five clicks. The worst feeling is having a coyote in your sites and all you can do is watch him walk away.

P.S. Make sure you have the right ammo for your gun: 223 not 204.

For coyote control services, connect with Terry Russ at 414.422.9298 or at [russtreeservice.com](http://russtreeservice.com).

Fred is co-owner of West Town Archery in Brookfield, Wisconsin. An avid bowhunter, archery technician and target shooter, Fred has two national titles and several state titles in indoor target archery to his credit. Connect with him at [westtownarchery.com](http://westtownarchery.com).





LEE GATZKE

## The Mobile Deer Hunter

*Frequently changing stand locations increases chances of success*

While we drove along on the interstate taking in the scenery my wife asked me, “Why are all those tree houses built way out in the swamps?” Of course, those “tree houses” we’re elevated hunting blinds, so I told her they weren’t kids’ playhouses but blinds used for hunting deer. When she asked if I had one, I responded, “Not the elevated kind, but I do hunt from ground blinds.” I know people who covet their elevated blinds and use them religiously, rarely leaving them to hunt out in the open. I’m told they’re pretty comfy. The problem with them is they are hard to relocate when the need arises, which is pretty often in my experience. They’re also illegal on public land.

The mentality of sitting comfy in your favorite spot, thinking a deer will eventually show, leads to diminishing returns. Hunting a spot that has the best sign or is where you’ve historically seen the most deer works well initially, but returning to the same spot day after day quickly results in reduced deer sightings. Deer may or may not leave those places, but they tend to divert their movements around your favorite stand or get nocturnal to avoid contact with you, the hunter.

After you’ve entered and exited your stand site, you have 1) laid down a scent trail; 2) possibly been sighted by deer; 3) made noise coming into and leaving, which the deer associate with humans.

If deer detect any of the above experiences, which they frequently do, they wise up and become ultra-alert to your presence. Multiply the times you visit that stand location by the ways you can be detected by deer and sooner than later the deer will know you are around, making them difficult to hunt. When deer concentrate on steering clear of humans, they are able to remain undetected by us even though they may be basically right under our noses. They stay

hidden in daylight hours or find safe places to relocate. This scenario commonly plays out every gun season here in Wisconsin.

Where gun hunting pressure is typically high, the southern two-thirds of the state, most of the deer have noticed human intrusion by opening day in areas that only the day before were free of it. Older deer have played this game before and go into human avoidance mode. They reduce daytime travel and seek areas free of human encounters. When they relocate to areas where humans aren’t detected, they remain active in daylight hours. This means they are still hunt-able by stand hunters ... if we know where those areas are and move into them.

We need to understand that we have to be mobile and move our stands into areas where deer have relocated to or remained all along, free of human interference. As usual, scouting is the key to finding these areas. The best time to scout is just after the snow melts in late winter/early spring. Ideally, we should hunt a different location each day, especially during the gun season, as long as there are other places that haven’t been muddled by human activity. Doing this will keep us on to deer that will be on their feet, if only for a little while, during daylight. A deer on its feet is a hunt-able deer for a stand hunter.

Being mobile and relocating our stands frequently keeps us in the game. Sometimes moving your stand only a short distance (50 - 100 yards) is all that’s needed to get back to being undetected by the deer. Being mobile puts us on to active daytime deer. *WG*

*Lee Gatzke is co-owner of NextBuk Outdoors, producers of tactical hunting videos. In grade school he chased rabbits with his homemade bow and arrows, which lead to a passion for hunting bigger game all over the Midwest and western states. In between hunting seasons Lee is usually scouting for his next buck.*



Scouting just after the snow has melted in early springtime reveals areas deer relocate to when human activity results in their seeking refuge.

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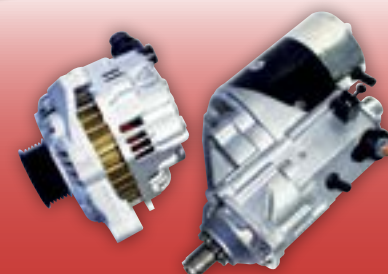
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JIM SERVI

# Learning To Trap Again

## Spring beaver and otter

Spring is here and most trappers have had their traps hanging in the shed for most of the winter. As the ice breaks up and water begins to open up around the state, one final trapping opportunity emerges. Those who were selected for an otter permit can try their luck, and for everyone else, spring beavers are on the prowl.

Previous articles discussed successful methods to target beaver and many of them hold true in the spring. Two things are important to remember about spring beavers. First, they're hungry and looking for fresh food. Second, it's their mating season. For these reasons they'll be on the move.

Castor (or beaver scent) mounds are especially effective to lure in these travelling beavers. It's best to locate mounds near areas where they are naturally travelling. Lodges or bank dens, runs, food sources, land or dam crossovers and channels all make excellent set locations on their own.

MB 750s, 330 Conibears, #5 Coil-springs and #4 Longsprings traps all work great, but it's important to remember to anchor them well. If you're using a foothold trap, it's best to use a drowning rig staked in the deep water rather than trying to deal with a live beaver. Trust me, I know.

As a kid I was always fascinated with otter and would smile every time I'd see their slides on the Wisconsin River ice. More than once I've encountered them while fishing. This furthered my fascination and eventually led to trying to trap them in my youth. Although I had plenty of snapped traps, it's probably a good thing I never caught one knowing what I know now. Otters are not only graceful and beautiful with their sleek fur, but they're powerful. My traps never would have held them, and if they had, I wasn't prepared for what came next.

Fortunately, I've learned a few things since then and have learned from many successful trappers. Ironically, many

of the same places where you target beavers are also great places to catch otters. The DNR puts out guidance to beaver trappers on how to avoid otter if you don't have a permit. Some of the best places are narrow runs, feeder streams, dam crossings, and other locations where they leave the water to cross areas that connect two bodies of water. Funneling otter into either a 220 or 330 Coniber in a run or feeder streams is consistently effective. Remember to always stake them well and use drowning rigs with foothold traps.

I truly hope that you've enjoyed reading the "Learning to Trap Again" series and, more importantly, that you get out and give it a try. You're not going to make a million bucks, but you'll get to spend more time enjoying the great outdoors trying to outsmart some new species.

Since everyone likes a good story, I'll close with one here. Just after the wily weasel article was published, I got a call



from Gary, my father-in-law. While he was in his basement one of those wily fellows poked his head out from the woodpile. He called me and within an hour I had my weasel box set up in the basement. Not two hours later I got a message. We already had him. Our guess is he was in one of the hollow logs when Gary threw in the wood. He sure was hungry.

You never know what you might encounter on the trapline. I look forward to hearing what you discover on yours.



Jim Servi is a freelance writer who spends every opportunity he can in the great outdoors with his wife and three boys. Contact Jim at [jimservi10@gmail.com](mailto:jimservi10@gmail.com)....

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SKYE GOODE

# Trapping Like A Dog

## Benefits of bringing your canine companion on the trapline

Since I picked up canine trapping a few years ago, I've come to learn that the best way to increase your success is to have a dog in the field with you. I oftentimes have people ask me how I choose locations and setups and my answer is, I don't. I have my collie, Duke, pick the spot for me. Whether he stops to mark his territory or just stops to sniff around for a second before taking off, I know that something about that patch of grass or that moss-covered rock got his canine nose to pause for a second, aligning his feet up right where I will place a trap. Along comes a coyote that night and odds are he'll stop for that same smell and, hopefully, get caught.

When it comes to late season trapping, breeding and territories are the most common focuses, so urinating on boundaries or following a female in heat is key. Duke has those same tendencies when we are out in the woods, and I don't knock him for it. The only time I redirect him is if he starts to get excited



Duke with a big male coon.

about deer, turkey or rabbits. Then I tell him "no" and show him more coyote or fox sign.

After a catch, I bring Duke along to interact with the animal. He's not there to intimidate but to be praised and encouraged. This is especially important

down the road if the trapper chooses to use drags, as you'll want your dog to follow the scent trail.

I find it even more beneficial to bring Duke in the field with me when I'm setting cable restraints. Cable restraints are like snares or a loop of cables that the coyote or fox walks through, and it slips around their neck. Except in Wisconsin it is only legal to have cable restraints with a relaxing lock that cannot be entangled in any trees, so it acts like a choke collar.

The best places to hang cable restraints are in well-traveled trails, transitional areas between fields or bait stations, or any brushy rabbit trail. The problem, especially when there's no snow, is finding the best trail to hang on. When I take Duke with me, I watch him as he takes certain trails over and over again and other areas that he avoids. Then I hang cable restraint loops on those same trails and call him back through the woods. My goal is that he

gets caught in the cable restraint. If he does, then I know I have the proper loop size and height set for a coyote. I then simply release Duke from the loop and reset it. Not only do I know it is set properly, but also the scent from Duke will entice other canids in the area to follow his same trail or tracks.

It may not be feasible for everyone who is interested in trapping to run out and buy a dog; however, consider offering to take your neighbor's lab for a walk, or borrow your family's beagle for an afternoon. You'll be amazed at all the things the dog notices that you would normally walk right past. *Wo*

*Skye Goode lives and works in Neillsville and has a young son who she takes hunting. She enjoys hunting and trapping and is a member of Whitetails Unlimited, Wisconsin Trappers Association, Wisconsin Bear Hunters Association, and Wisconsin Turkey Dog Federation. When she's not in the woods, Skye enjoys hand sewing fur hats from the animals she's harvested.....*

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TODD LENSING

# Operation Red, White, And Bluebill

## Thanking our military veterans

Operation Red, White, and Bluebill (ORWB) is a special event for military veterans who might not normally have an opportunity to go duck hunting, either due to disability or lack of equipment and resources. It was started by guides Captain Dean Crom and Captain Mike Thun of Big Water Outdoors in the Green Bay area. I was able to go over there a couple years to help out, and we've held it here on the Mississippi River for the past two seasons.

As a waterfowl guide for over 13 years I have met many wonderful clients from all over the United States. Everyone has their own reason for joining me for a Mississippi River duck hunt, from wanting that elusive trophy bull canvasback to a bucket list hunt to the many who come season after season. I am very fortunate to have a lot of repeat clientele and have formed many lasting friendships throughout the years. I work hard and have much gratitude to those who believe in me and support me in my dream job.

I am proud to participate with ORWB as I feel it's necessary for us as Americans to thank our veterans in whatever way we can. Because they have made sacrifices and defended our nation, we are free to do the things we enjoy, including going hunting, something many people take for granted.

Last October we got together for the 5th Annual ORWB, hosted at our motel in Ferryville overlooking the Big River. The vets arrived late afternoon on Friday for a barbecue and bonfire, getting to know one another and discussing how the early morning hunt was to proceed. We had three big blind boats and took two vets in each one along with a guide and a helper. We headed out in the wee hours to get set up and let the adventure begin! We had shooting early on, which continued as the morning progressed. As I do each day out with clients, we cooked up a big breakfast. That day it was bacon, homemade biscuits and gravy, cinnamon rolls, coffee and juice. We were fortunate to be able to get a few ducks in each boat, and a terrific time was had by all. Laughter and fellowship of like-minded individuals makes for a great day.

Following our return from the river we gathered once again at the bonfire



Military veterans, guides and helpers who participated in ORWB 2015.

to share stories from the day's hunt. We were able to provide the veterans with a few gifts, including personally-signed duck calls from Phil Robertson, hand-made lanyards, caps, shirts, shotgun shells, homemade blankets, and much more. They all truly enjoyed the time spent together and the tokens of appreciation they were given. I can even go so far as to say the veterans were surprised from beginning to end. It's great to participate in something so well-received.

Besides being thankful for the service of our military, I am humbled by the generosity of our community: organizations, businesses and individuals who have helped make this event so special. A lot goes into putting something like this together and it's made easier when we all join forces.

Even though the duck season only lasts a mere 60 days, I think about it and prepare for it all year long. We are already planning for the 6th Annual Operation Red, White, and Bluebill. I think about our valuable military veterans often and appreciate their sacrifice on my behalf. I tip my hat to them and say, "Thank you, from the bottom of my heart!" *OW*

Captain Todd Lensing is owner/operator of Flyway Fowling Guide Service, Pool 9 duck hunting outfitter. He and his wife, Donna, also own the Grandview Motel in Ferryville, located on the Mississippi River in southwest Wisconsin. Contact them at 608.734.3235.

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TOM MUELLER

# More Retriever Training Secrets

## Obedience is key

In the January/February issue of OWO I wrote about some little known “secrets” that, if followed, will get you on the path to having the retriever that you envisioned when you brought it home as a pup. Training consistently, training with helpers, and joining a retriever club such as Fox Valley, where you can tap into the members for their knowledge and expertise, are three things that you need to do if you’re training your dog yourself and expect it to become the retriever of your dreams. A couple of other secrets that I can share are obedience and establishing and maintaining a good relationship with your dog.

Obedience from a working retriever is of paramount importance. Nothing is more frustrating than hunting with a dog that just won’t do what it’s told to do when it’s told to do it. Everyone has a story or two about days of hunting that have been bad or good because the dog did or didn’t do what was expected of it.

Most of the retrievers that are bred

today are very high energy dogs—that’s the way most of us like them—which is why it’s important to get them obedient and under control right from the beginning. Once that’s underway your training can advance. Teaching obedience to a pup or young dog is simple and easy enough. I’m not adverse to using treats with a young dog to train it to heel, sit and come to you. Once it’s become conditioned to those commands I can advance its obedience training so it will eventually heel off lead, sit for longer periods of time, and consistently come when called from longer distances.

Eventually, as the dog matures I swap out the treats for a tennis ball. The ultimate reward for any retriever is the retrieve. They are all hard-wired for that. Using a tennis ball keeps the dog focused on you for that little retrieve it’s going to get when it does the job right. It also keeps things fun for the dog. Heeling off lead, sitting on the whistle, coming when called, and steadying are

all behaviors easily conditioned into the dog by using a tennis ball as its reward and keep your dog “into” you.

Using food and a tennis ball for rewards to teach and condition your young retriever to be reliably obedient are also an excellent way to establish and maintain a good relationship. You could hang a sign around any retriever’s neck with the words, “Will Work For Food.” Of course, in using food rewards, your young dog will quite readily suck up to you. It will learn hard and fast, “If I do this, I get a treat.” Your dog will become your best buddy because it knows you have what it wants and will do what you say just to get it. As your dog matures, food rewards become impractical for advancing its training. Switching to a tennis ball solves that problem. Again, because it knows you have the ball, you become the “go-to guy” to satisfy its fix for a retrieve.

As your retriever grows older and you continue to train in this fashion, it will



Tom and his best friends.

become conditioned to give the desired response. You now have established a solid relationship and have become your dog’s best friend. *OWO*

Tom has been actively training retrievers since the early 1980s. His passion has evolved into helping others achieve the satisfaction that he has had from the sport. For more information about the Fox Valley Retriever Club or training help contact Tom at [winddancer.rtrvrs@hotmail.com](mailto:winddancer.rtrvrs@hotmail.com).



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*Presents Firearms Info from Ron Stresing*

**RON STRESING**

## Introducing Children To The Shooting Sports

### *A step-by-step process*

Teaching your child to use the firearm they received as a Christmas or birthday gift is a serious undertaking. Having taught my younger son to shoot, and having helped other parents, I suggest a simple step-by-step process with an emphasis on safety every step of the way. Hunter safety courses are mandatory and a great idea even if your child never plans on going hunting. I suggest firearms safety and handling should start even earlier in the home.

The simple air rifle or BB gun made famous in the movie "A Christmas Story" is an excellent way to start. It teaches basic shooting form, sight alignment, and safe handling techniques. Begin with being aware of the muzzle

direction and trigger control. A BB gun allows loading and even target practice indoors with a safe range and backstop. Make the use of eye and ear protection mandatory so it becomes as automatic as wearing a seat-belt when entering an automobile.

This is also the time for that sobering reality check that shows your student the consequences of a gunshot gone wrong. I showed both my sons the effects of bullets shot on big and small game I brought home and explained the destruction was the same on the human body. Movies, T.V. and video games show sanitized versions without the shattered bones and blood loss. Both my sons have a healthy respect for firearms.

After safe gun handling and shooting form, work on basic marksmanship. Explain the differences in using a rifle with one projectile and a shotgun with a spread of many projectiles. Graduate from a BB gun to a .22 caliber rifle and teach accuracy with the acronym B.R.A.S.S.: Breathe, Relax, Aim, Slow Squeeze. The same sight alignment and trigger control basics apply from a .22 to a .458 Win.Mag.

When teaching shotgun skills, remember the British phrase "wood on wood." In other words, keep your wooden head on the wooden stock. Without a rear sight, your head on the shotgun's stock is actually your rear sight. You can

*continued on page 45*



*Tim Herson explains clearing a semi-auto shotgun to his son, Devon. (Photo courtesy of Tim Herson)*



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STUART WILKERSON

## Back To The Future

*Midwest Industries' new .308 Rifles are chambered in the original AR caliber*

A firearms' revolution started with the Soviet Union's adoption of the select-fire Kalashnikov in the late 1940s. The Kalashnikov was the antithesis of the United States' cumbersome and unnecessarily powerful .30/06 semi-automatic M1 Garand. Capable of controllable fully-automatic fire, the 7.62 x 39 caliber Kalashnikov featured a box magazine that held 12 more rounds than the Garand, was more compact, shot a smaller yet perfectly adequate round, was easy to maintain, and required a lot less maintenance. While not as accurate as the Garand, the Kalashnikov was a far better combat weapon.

Realizing that the new Russian rifle was the future of infantry weaponry, the United States Army began looking in earnest to replace the outdated Garand during the 1950s. One of the options considered was the AR-10 manufactured by Armalite, a division of the Fairchild Engine and Airplane Corporation. The



*The new Midwest Industries .308 Rifle. Accurate and powerful.*

AR-10 looked and operated nothing like the Garand. Designed by Eugene Stoner and chambered in 7.62 x 51/.308, the Fairchild Armalite was the forerunner of today's popular AR-15 platform.

Unfortunately, the Fairchild Armalite entry into the Garand replacement competition was not fully baked. While it

showed promise, it was not up to snuff in the reliability department. Interestingly, within a decade or so of its initial rejection, Stoner's basic design would be revised and chambered for a smaller round and still serves today as the M-4 in 5.56 NATO caliber.

In later years a number of companies

would attempt what Fairchild Armalite could not: a reliable AR in 7.62 x 51 NATO caliber. The primary allure of the 7.62 x 51/.308 over the 5.56 is its power and increased accuracy over longer distances, especially in windy conditions.

Like AR-15s in 5.56 NATO, some 7.62 x 51/.308 AR-10-type rifles are better than others. Unlike conventional AR-15s, AR-10-types all are propriety in design. In other words, many parts are not standardized. If a non-standard part breaks, replacements can only be found from the manufacturer. Purchasing a good quality AR-10 type rifle out of the gate is the wisest choice.

Among the best of those choices is a Midwest Industries (MI) .308 Rifle. "With the frustrations that follow the (AR-type) .308 guns, we decided to make our own so we could bring to our customers a rifle that will be trouble-

*continued on page 45*



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ROBB MANNING

## Every Day Carry Beretta M9A3

The peculiar thing about the Beretta M9 is that its name is actually 92 FS but more people know it by the M9 military designation. Whatever people call it, it's my all-time favorite handgun. I carried one for much of my nearly 11-year career in the Marine Corps. I've depended on it, staked my life on it, and I've known a lot of tough men who have as well. The problem is, preferences in firearms have evolved and the M9 isn't as practical today.

Beretta changed all of that when they released the M9A3. Forget about the 92 FS name. Beretta is targeting the military and civilians in one fell swoop of marketing. The original intent was to entice the army into forgoing the Modular Handgun System (MHS) program and stick with the M9 but in the A3 form. At the same time the exact same M9A3 will be provided on commercial shelves for us civvies. The M9A3 fulfills 80 percent of what the army is looking for in the MHS—at pennies on the dollar. Unfortunately, for the time being, the army would rather spend upwards of a billion dollars in testing and procurement of an MHS. Mind you, it's a handgun, not a main battle rifle.

All of the complaints about the M9 over the years are addressed with the A3. One of the biggest gripes is the large grip size. The A3 uses the same straight grip as the Vertec model. It's far slimmer than the standard 92FS. For those who prefer the grip of the 92FS, the A3 includes a Hogue wrap-around grip that replicates the 92FS grip ...except way better. I've never had an issue with the original M9 grip; my hands are pretty big. Yet, I love the angle and feel of the A3 Vertec grip. But when I put on the Hogue grip and held it, it was the best-feeling grip I think I've ever held. It's like a melding of gun to hand, and it shoots like a dream. It grips your hand and won't let go but in a comfortable way. It's a rubbery feel, not the aggressive grips that remove skin.

*The M9A3 comes with three notable improvements: straight Vertec grip, accessory rail, and suppressor ready.*



Manufacturer/Model: Beretta M9A3

Caliber: 9x19 NATO

Action Type: Single/Double

Receiver: Cerecote finish

Barrel: 4.9 inch, threaded

Magazine: 17-round, sand resistant finish

Sights: Trijicon Night Sights

Weight: 33.9 ounces

Dimensions: 5.4 x 8.5 x 1.5

Accessories: Hogue Wrap-around grip

Suggested Retail Price: \$1099

Website: beretta.com

### Other features that I really like about the A3:

- The typical safety/decocker can be easily swapped out for a decocker-only
- Accessory rail
- It ships with Trijicon night sights, and they are outstanding. Front sight is now also removable.
- Beretta makes a lighter trigger that can be easily swapped out
- The threaded barrel is a big plus. The A3 is just as reliable with a suppressor as it is without.
- It has a beveled magazine well for quick, sure-handed reloads
- The Cerecote finish is outstanding. It's tough and looks great. Some people don't care for FDE, but to me FDE is the new black. For hundreds of years firearms have come in either blued

or black. I like that they now come in different colors like FDE, OD Green or camo.

- Magazines have a sand-repelling finish
- The magazine round count was upped from 15 to 17 rounds

I got to spend two weeks with an M9A3 demo gun but then reluctantly had to return it. People ask me if it shoots well and is worth the cost. I get to handle a lot of guns, and most of them are really good. Five minutes after handling and shooting this one, I had my name put on the list to get one. Not only is it the best-looking handgun to come out in years, it can shoot and is reliable. *WM*

*Robb Manning served in the U.S. Marine Corps for nearly 11 years, where he developed a passion and knowledge for firearms of all types. Since 2010 Robb has been a gun/hunting writer and also films gun and gear videos for his YouTube channel, 762x51n8o.*

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**STRESING, from page 42**


also start out with the air rifle and hand-tossed empty aluminum cans. In an outdoor area with eye protection and a safe background, toss empty cans into the air and have the student swing on and shoot at them, using just the front sight. I started a friend's son doing this, and after a while, he was hitting eight or nine out of 10 cans regularly. Keep training sessions short and on point and always emphasize safety.

While the .410 bore shotgun is often used to teach shotgunning, I prefer a 20-gauge gun. A .410 bore has a very small shot charge, and ammunition is usually expensive and hard to obtain. Twenty-gauge ammunition is about half the price and readily available. Used 20-gauge shotguns are often less-expensive and more widely available.

Use light recoil target loads, and start with hand-thrown clay targets. Success in breaking targets is important, so keep the shots simple and explain concepts like giving the target forward allowance or "leading it." Once your student has mastered hand trap

targets, try machine-thrown clays at a range. I suggest trap. Save more complex games like skeet or sporting clays for later on. As your student's scores climb from practice, their confidence level will, too.

If you plan on introducing them to hunting, try small game like doves, feral pigeons and squirrels. These are great animals for beginners, as they are hunted in warm weather and are plentiful. My son, Adam, started out dove and pigeon hunting. Shots at pigeons and doves taught him the basics of pass shooting and applying enough lead. He went on to fill four Canada goose tags his first year using a 20-gauge single-shot.

We Americans have proud traditions of both gun ownership and hunting. Passing on the skills to do both safely are important in keeping these traditions going well into the future. 

*Ron Stresing has been an outdoor writer since 1996 and has had articles published in Midwest Outdoors, Fur-Fish-Game, and Badger Sportsman magazines. He lives in South Milwaukee with his wife, Donna.*

**WILKERSON, from page 43**

free," MI Retail Store Manager Peter Bratz said. "Far too often we would unbox a gun from another manufacturer and before hanging it on the wall we would add our free-float handguards or upgrade the furniture. Even with the addition of free float handguards the accuracy of any of our competitors was nothing to brag about. Our guns come with accurate barrels and many of the upgrades people add to other guns already installed on ours."

Long known and respected for their quality aftermarket parts, MI is comparatively new to the world of AR-type rifle manufacturers. Their 5.56 rifles have already earned a reputation for quality and reliability. "When we make the guns ourselves, we can control the quality," Peter noted. "Midwest Industries was already making most of the components to build a gun, so the next logical step was to bring our own high quality guns to the market."

Reviews of MI's .308 Rifles have been extremely positive. One reviewer has shot over 3,000 rounds of ammunition without a single malfunction. Groups of an inch or less at 100 yards with decent ammunition can be expected. The rifle balances well and the finish impeccable. MI .308 Rifles are all assembled from start to finish to test fire by MI armorer Andy Yohnk. "He is a bit of a perfectionist and wants everything to be done to his standard, so he does it himself," Peter explained.

Like all MI products, the .308 Rifles are entirely made in the United States, and many of those parts, like the competition grade Criterion stainless steel barrel, are made in Wisconsin. Rifles are available in 16-, 18- and 20-inch lengths. All components are high quality, and many of them are manufactured by MI, including the forged upper and lower receiver, the M-LOK handguards, muzzle brake, bolt and carrier. Grip and buttstock are by Magpul.

"Our rifles are not mass produced," Peter said. "They are done one at a time and are made of only the highest quality components. We do not cut corners with cheap barrels. We do not produce a .308 Rifle that comes without a free float barrel. We do not put cheap furniture on our guns but rather quality stocks with good cheek welds that aid in good shooting. Our guns will hold their own with anyone else's, including higher dollar guns. We wouldn't put our name on them if we didn't think so."

If Fairchild Armalite had presented the Army with a .308 Rifle as good as MI's, the M14 would never have entered production.



*Stuart Wilkerson is a longtime OWO contributor, award-winning Wisconsin journalist, and firearms expert specializing in historical firearms and collecting.*

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