

July/August 2012  
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# On Wisconsin Outdoors

with the  
**Dick Ellis Experts**

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Photos by Dick Ellis

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GLENN WALKER

## Summertime Bass Tactic *The slop ambush*

Oh, sweet summertime. Long days of 90-plus degree weather means one thing to a bass fisherman ... SLOP FISHIN'! Much advancement has been made in the topwater frog market, but the roots of this lure can be traced back to fishing in the slop.

"Slop," as it is referred to by anglers, is when vegetation forms a large blanket-like coating over the water. There are several forms of vegetation that can create these vast regions of slop fields. Lily pads that were once scattered across the water have taken an area by storm and now have other forms of vegetation filling in the open water pockets that once existed. Duck wart is another example of vegetation that can make up some prime areas for slop fishing. These areas look like a sea of green floating atop the water. Duck wart can either be very thin or thick, based on how much vegetation is bunched up below. The other forms of slop are grass lines that have been folded over and are now lying across the top of the water and areas where the wind blows any form of debris into a secluded pocket or corner.

Determining what kind of slop the bass are in is important because on many bodies of water, such as the Mississippi River, you could spend days upon days fishing fields of green matted vegetation and not be very successful.

There are two other factors that I take into consideration when locating bass within the slop. The first is whether there are any other forms of cover located within or near the slop. The second factor is whether there is any current running through the slop. Oftentimes bass will position



*Nothing like the rush of a big large-mouth taking down a frog in open water.*

***"My primary lure when fishing slop is a soft hollow-bodied frog that I can work on top of the matted vegetation."***

themselves in the slop that is within close range to the current.

My primary lure when fishing slop is a soft hollow-bodied frog that I can work on top of the matted vegetation. Today's high quality frogs on the market come with top performance hooks that help you hook the bass and keep them on until they get in the boat. As for colors, I like to keep it simple by using a white, black, or brown frog.

Regardless of what lure you are going to be throwing when you are slop fishing, it is important to use a line that is strong and has no stretch. The advancement of braided lines have made slop fishing that much easier. On my reels I use 60-pound braided line, spooled on a high-speed baitcast reel, on a 7-foot-plus heavy action rod.

Slop fishing is an art of bass fishing that gives an angler a huge rush of adrenaline and accounts for numerous quality bass over the summer months and into the fall.

I look forward to seeing you on the water in the green stuff! 



*Bass love choking down a frog in the summertime!*

For more information, to see instructional videos, and to follow Glenn through his tournament season, check out [www.fishglenn.com](http://www.fishglenn.com).

DICK ELLIS

## On Wisconsin Outdoors Okauchee's deep thrills

With orders from the skipper to slow down the retrieve on the 14-inch triple-tailed G-Train cutting the deep, gin-clear water of Okauchee Lake, I watched the turning bronze blade emerge on a vertical run from the depths. Several years before, Dennis Radloff, one of Wisconsin's premiere musky guides in the southeast and on the waters of Green Bay, had caught and released a 53-inch musky, on film, in June, on Okauchee, on the very bait he had armed me with. A 38-inch spotted musky suspended on this same deep pattern had been taken in his Princecraft just days before our own hunt. Watching the lure's distant flash and abstract return from the depths, I didn't need any fuel thrown on the anticipation fire. Radloff, though, has a way of delivering adrenalin-laced musky tales.

"We're working deep water for suspended fish parallel to a sunken road bed," said Radloff. "The best thing about fishing deep water is that these

fish are the least pressured fish in the lake. Usually, they're going to hit early or mid-way through the retrieve. But when they follow to the boat from the deep ... look out. The first time out here a fish followed my lure straight up from the deep, I thought 'what the heck is that?' It looked like an ice cream bucket coming up behind the bait. The mouth was wide open. What I was really looking at was a 48-inch musky."

Hopefully, June 14 we would find another such heart attack, but it probably wouldn't be easy; Okauchee doesn't give up her secrets without work. At 1,178 acres, the Waukesha County gem, Radloff said, is a challenge to fish. Shallow, sprawling bays and a deep main basin with maximum depth of 98 feet, clear water and an abundance of steep breaking structure not typical of Wisconsin musky lakes can make it intimidating to the newcomer.

"On a typical musky lake you generally pull up in 12 feet of water and



Musky guide Dennis Radloff and his client, Dan Garvey, caught and released this spotted musky in June suspended in deep water on Okauchee Lake. Spotted muskies were stocked in Okauchee by the Milwaukee Chapter of Muskies Inc. four years ago.

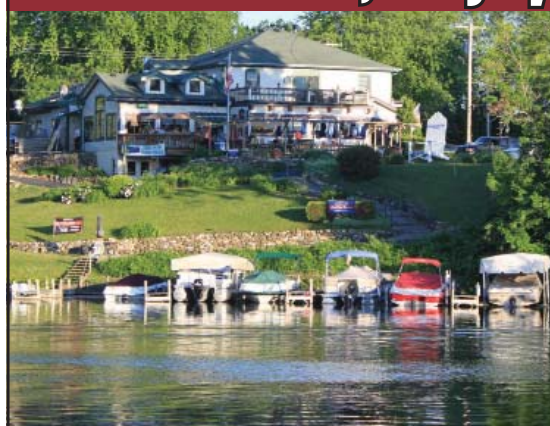
work the weed edges," he said. "That's not the case here. You might work a deep weed edge at 10 or 11 feet but everything falls away so quick, it's a real challenge to approach. It reminds me of a Canadian Shield lake. It's got

personality. That structure, including underwater points and a sunken road bed, deep open water, and a ciscoe forage base all contribute to a healthy, hearty fish."

*continued on page 19*



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DENNY MURAWSKA

# Taxidermy And Replication

## *Avoid the myths, misconceptions and untruths*

**I**t started as a dream of clear, cold waters and giant fish skulking in the weed beds. Then came the planning, searching for the right place, time, and target quarry. At some point, your anticipation reached a fever pitch as tackle boxes and rod holders were stowed aboard some vehicle to transport you to the dream. Finally, there arrived the day it all came together, and a trophy fish lay doing a lazy S-curve by the side of your boat. You decided long ago this fish would be released to fight again. And so it was that, with all due care, this fish of a lifetime was turned back to its underwater world.

Long after the adrenaline rush and racing heart have calmed, you give thought to that peak moment of life. Still, as mankind has done since time immemorial, you wish for some tangible keepsake. In days past, most fish were kept and eaten. Or, if you wished for a trophy, your quarry was skinned and mounted. While such skin mounts are a viable option, particularly

for more common species, your heart insisted you let it go. Now the only option is to have a replica of that magnificent fish created.

### Taxidermy vs. Replication

Taxidermy has always meant the moving of skin. So in a sense, a replica fish is not really taxidermy. Still, it is almost always taxidermists who are consulted to provide the trophy. If this is your choice, there are definitely some things you should know. Being a fish taxidermist and replication specialist for over 30 years, I know firsthand of the many myths, misconceptions, and outright untruths that abound regarding this field. Since this can be an expensive proposition, you really owe it to yourself to pursue your vision in an educated manner.

To begin with, many believe replicas are plastic fish that are piled in warehouses and can be pulled off the shelf and sent pronto. No so. In almost all cases, these are made from



*Museum grade replicas ... a far cry from what used to be!*

existing molds one at a time, as ordered, to match a particular fish as closely as possible. Can your actual fish be molded? Yes, if you killed and kept it in good condition. It can be an expensive

proposition to have this custom mold created—very expensive. However, going through the proper channels, a top-notch fish head can often connect

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JOHN LUTHENS

# Langlade County's Wolf River

## *A walk back to heaven*



*The upper Wolf River in Langlade County.*

Many outdoor publications today shy away from the “Me & Joe Stories.” Those are the tales that go along the lines of: “Me and Joe went fishing to a cool spot, and we caught some fish, and it was really neat being in the great outdoors together.” On the surface, I guess it doesn’t make for the best copy.

The great outdoor writers of the past said it better, though. They brought you to the brink of where they were plying their trade. They made you forget the page-written words standing between you and the glory of their surroundings. You actually became “Joe” and were out there with them, stalking game or maybe sneaking through the alders on your belly, swatting mosquitoes and getting to the perfect casting angle above a hiding brown trout.

They sometimes told you how to do it, and sometimes they even told you exactly where, but often you had to read between the lines to uncover the basics. The basics seemed less important than the scenes that were unfolding. Authors like Gordon MacQuarrie and Robert Traver really opened up the outdoors for their

readers, and those two, especially, did it in the fields of Wisconsin and Michigan where they lived, worked and played their whole lives. I recommend reading both of them if you really want to know about the “Joes” who pioneered our outdoor visions.

Today there is ample reasoning behind the movement away from “Joe” and more toward the “How-To” and “Where-To” articles. There seems to be less time, more choices of outdoor activities and often less available resources. We need to make the most of everything. Experts today specialize in musky or walleye, white tail or bear, and any species in between that climbs, grunts, gobbles or splashes. They know what they are doing, and if they are willing to share that knowledge, we would be remiss as sportsmen not to listen; not to mention we’d get skunked

a lot more.

All of this leads into the fact that I’m not much of an expert when it comes to the finer points of where to go or how to catch a fish in certain types of structure. I can fling a fly on the end of a line without getting too tangled up, and I can drift a night crawler down a trout run with better-than-average results. I need to rely on as much of the experts’ writing as I can get my hands on. Most of all, I need to rely on “Joe” to call and tell me where to go.

I know a lot of people with eyes and ears intently tuned to the seasonal patterns of Wisconsin habitat, but, unfortunately, I don’t know anyone actually named Joe. I do know someone named Shawn, however. And when Shawn called to tell me that he had “found a little slice of trout heaven way up on the Wolf River, in Langlade County,” I couldn’t help but perk my ears.

“We’ve got to walk in for a mile or so,” said Shawn. “I got a tip from a local bartender. It’s definitely worth a trip up here for you.”

“Have you been catching many?”

“Only some little ones,” he said from the other end of the line. “But to tell you the truth, the scenery is so fantastic that I don’t even care if I catch a trout or not.”

Now, if it was just an average “Joe” who’d called, I’d question driving two and a half hours up into the Nicolet National Forest on a dubious watering hole rumor for a crack at “little ones.” But Shawn used to spend his summers on the Bering Sea as a commercial cod and halibut fisherman. I thought there was a chance his concept of “little ones” might be a bit skewed. When the halibut fishing closed for the year, he’d take his snowboard and spend the winter in the Rocky Mountains. He’s seen “slices of heaven” from sea level to 10,000 feet. I figured he knew a scenic stretch when he saw it. Needless to say, I made the drive.

We met in the fly shop at the four-way intersection hamlet of Langlade. It’s a first rate fly shop that doubles as a gas station—a fact that you wouldn’t know unless you stopped and went in for a chat. (I recommend

haunting the local establishments to any “Joe” looking to catch a fish off the beaten path.) The proprietor reached beneath a worn counter and produced a fly hatch chart. He pointed us in the direction of a glass-covered wooden case filled with flies. He shared some favorite streamers, reminiscing that they were the same types his grandfather used with which to “knock the socks off” the Wolf River trout. Shawn and I fortified our fishing supplies from the glass-cased compartments.

I was thrilled with the fly shop discovery, and I wasn’t disappointed with the scenery when we got to the trail. The walk in took us through powerful stands of hemlock and cedar. It wasn’t a totally secret trail, and we met a lone fisherman walking out who looked exhausted but happy. Boulders the size of pick-up trucks sprung from the undergrowth, and it seemed like the times of the glaciers had come into the future to greet our own walk back to the river. The walk was over too quickly, and then we were fishing the upper Wolf River.

Shawn and I fished together downstream but soon lost sight of each other for hours at a time, hidden in the islands and channels that popped out on both sides of the river. More massive boulders surfaced from the water, creating deep cut lines above and below the big rocks.

I couldn’t strike a fish in the deeper water, but moving through the shallows under the cedars and in the backwater pools, I saw plenty of nice-sized browns fanning the rock bed bottom. I never figured out what they wanted, if anything, but it was fantastic sight fishing that I’d never before witnessed and only read about in stories of famous eastern and western trout rivers.

The wind picked up and thunderstorms moved through. I heard Shawn yelling at me from downriver. I thought he might want to make an exit before we really got soaked. Then I noticed he was holding up a fish. I slogged my way through the rock pools to see what fly hatch secret he had hit on. I thought there might be a chance

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JERRY KIESOW

# Fly Fishing In Wisconsin

## Hooks, part one

**Online Fly Fishing Q&A** with *Jerry Kiesow*  
Check it out at [OnWisconsinOutdoors.com/FlyFishing](http://OnWisconsinOutdoors.com/FlyFishing)



Crappie on fly. The hook. Important? Well, it only holds onto the fish for you. That important enough?

**H**ooks. Those metal things that hang onto the fish while you try to coax it into the boat. Hooks. A rather integral part of your tackle, I'd say. What do you know about them, and why should you care?

### Questions

Unless you tie your own flies, and many do not, how much attention do you pay to the hooks, which are the foundation for those frauds? I ask the same question to you who DO tie. Or don't you even think about the subject? After all, what is there to think about when it comes to hooks? As I said, they only hold onto the fish for you, right? Yes, but perhaps there is bit more about them that you should know. Read on.

### A Little History

Books and web pages go into great detail, and put forth a variety of theories, on this subject. All

that is required today—so you have a better understanding about that aforementioned foundation—is that the original “hook” was probably a gorge made from wood or stone or bone. It was buried in the bait in such a way that when the fish swallowed the bait, the fisherman would tighten the line and the gorge would get caught cross-wise somewhere within the fish: the mouth or stomach, usually.

Most writers agree that by 2000 B.C. the Egyptians were fishing with rods and line, and using hooks.

The first written instruction on how to make hooks was recorded in “A Treatise on Fishing with an Angle” in 1496. The first commercial hooks became available in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century but were of poor quality because the ability to make good steel did not yet exist. It wasn't until the late 19<sup>th</sup> century that quality hooks became common.

About that same time, the eye became a part of the hook. Until then, hooks were “blind.” Flies were attached to the lines via gut or horsehair, which was “whipped” to the hook prior to making the fly itself.

Hook sizes have always been a dilemma. Some manufactures listed their hooks using #1 as their largest size, while others used #1 as the smallest. That situation has improved.

### Sizes

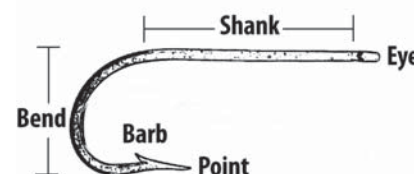
Today, at least in our fly fishing world (I am not certain about other forms of fishing), hooks have become somewhat uniform. The key word here is *somewhat*. There are still differences between manufactures, but if a recipe for a fly calls for a #12 nymph hook, or if a writer reports that he/she caught all of the trout on #16 Adams, the reader can be 90 percent sure of the hook size listed. Modern hook sizes are based on the non-existent size of zero (0, aught).

If the size of a hook is followed by the zero, the hook increases in size as the number becomes larger—#6/0 is larger than #4/0. Thus, the smallest hook when the zero is used in designating the hook's size is #2/0. What is the largest? I have no clue, but I use #14/0 monsters to help demonstrate how to tie different knots with which to attach flies to tippets in my classes. I can tell you this. A #14/0 will not fit into any fly vise; a Vise-Grip pliers might work.

Contrary to the above, when only a number is used to identify the hook size, as the number becomes larger, the hook becomes smaller, i.e., #4 is larger than #6. These go as small as, I believe, #32. (By the way, there are only even numbers used in hook sizes. Uneven numbers do not exist.)

### Hook Anatomy

There are five basic parts to a hook. Beginning at the “front” (eye) and ending at the “working end” (point), there is the eye, shank, bend, barb, and point. Each part is significant to the fly fisherman.



Working backward, the point of the hook must be kept sharp to be effective. Most hooks purchased today come sharp, but that doesn't mean they will stay that way. Modern points, whether chemically or laser sharpened, still get dull with use, especially when they have a lot of contact with all that bone in a fish's mouth. Carry a fine stone or file with you at all times. It only takes a couple of strokes to return the hook to penetrating sharpness.

Next we have the barb. Now, I advocate fly fishing with barbless hooks. I always tell my students that I have never lost a fish because of a barbless hook, and I am serious. I lose fish, but not because I use hooks without that “claw.” I truly believe you get faster, easier, deeper penetration when the barb is flattened or removed. Is that true for other forms of fishing? I do not believe so. A fly has no weight; therefore, when a fish comes out of the water shaking its head, there is no weight there to move and shift and loosen up and fall out. (That is my story and I am sticking to it.)

Do I file the barb off, as many do?

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TOM CARPENTER

# Cubs Corner

## Introducing the shooting sports

*“Practice time gives them confidence when the real thing flushes from the brush or grass, or sets its wings over the marsh.”*

With high summer on the landscape, it's time to start putting a little planning into upcoming hunting seasons for your young sportsmen and women. When wingshooting for grouse, pheasants, ducks, geese, or other flying quarry is on the autumn agenda, it's a good idea to get kids out shooting now. Practice time gives them confidence when the real thing flushes from the brush or grass, or sets its wings over the marsh.



Ethan Kerr of the Burlington Demons Shooting Team. The Demons are defending SCTP National Champions and hope to repeat at the SCTP Finals held at the World Recreation and Sporting Complex in Sparta, IL on July 17-21. To learn more about the SCTP visit [www.shootsctp.org](http://www.shootsctp.org). To learn more about the BHS Demons Shooting team visit [www.bhsdemonstrap.com](http://www.bhsdemonstrap.com). Photo courtesy of BHS Demons Shooting Team.

A great way to get out shooting is to play shotgun games. These activities get a shotgun in everybody's hands, they're fun, and they put a lot of shells through the shotgun ... all of which will help make kids (and you) better shooters and helps drop more birds during hunting season.

### Trap

In a round of trap shooting, you shoot five shells at each of five different “stations,” for a total of 25 shots. The stations are positioned in an arc, and the trap house (where the targets come from) is out front. Each shooter takes his or her turn, shot by shot, until all five shells for that station are gone, then everybody rotates to the next station. The shots are made at 20 to 35 or so yards. You never quite know at which angle they will fly, but you do know when, because when you shout “pull,” the clay bird (disc) is released.

Trapshooting is good practice because it really gets you firing shells and swinging at a variety of targets—some straight away and some angling to the left or right. Trap is good practice for upland bird hunting and perfect for working on shooting fundamentals.

### Sporting Clays

The great thing about sporting clays is the variety. In sporting clays, you walk a course and stop at various stations that mimic different wingshooting situations. One station rolls or bounces a clay target along the ground like a rabbit, while others fly out and away from you, or right at you, or straight up, or dropping down, or crossing from one side to the other. Tall towers are used for some stations. You never quite know what you're going to get—just like hunting! Kids love sporting clays.

No two sporting clays courses are exactly alike, and that makes this game even more fun. Most courses have 10 to 15 shooting stations, and you'll usually shoot five shells per station. The sporting clays method was designed by shooting school instructors who knew that this less-controlled shooting environment would make for better all-around shooting in the field.

## Squirrels. Pheasants.

[OnWisconsinOutdoors.com/UplandGameHunting](http://OnWisconsinOutdoors.com/UplandGameHunting)



Myles Walker of the Burlington Demons Shooting Team takes aim at the 2012 Scholastic Clay Target Program (SCTP) State Shoot held on June 16 at the Waukesha Gun Club. Walker posted the only perfect score of 100 to win the Boys Varsity Gold Medal while leading the Demons (489 of 500 targets) to their second consecutive Wisconsin SCTP Varsity title. Photo courtesy of Burlington High School Demons Shooting Team

### Skeet

Skeet shooting is great practice for actual bird hunting conditions, especially for grouse and ducks. This is because the target starts up high, from a shooting house, and crosses in front at some angle. It's fast and exciting! There are seven positions within a semicircle, and the shooting houses sit at either end of that layout. You really have to swing fast to catch up to the speeding targets and make your shot. At some points in the round, a “double” is thrown: two birds to knock down at once.

Skeet shooting was invented by William Harden Foster, an avid New England grouse hunter, in the 1920s as a way to simulate hunting conditions. He got it right, and this shotgun game is still going strong and making good wingshooters. You really learn how to swing and get on the target fast with skeet shooting.


### Duck Towers

Some shooting ranges have duck towers—three to six tall structures that hold traps (clay target throwers) which throw birds at different angles. Many of these towers feature a platform that can elevate or lower the trap for different height or angle shots. As the name

suggests, this is great practice for duck hunting. Unlike upland birds, ducks are usually flying in from the sky, and if you're serious about waterfowling (Youth waterfowl weekend comes quick in September!), you need to get kids practicing.

Every duck tower layout is different, but they're all fun. You're often shooting from behind or around a barrier to simulate shooting out of a duck blind or from cattail. Duck tower shooting can be a humbling experience. But that's why you practice.

### Conclusion

Need to find a shooting range where you can have fun with one or more of these shotgunning games? Visit the National Shooting Sports Foundation website at [http://wheretoshoot.org/Find\\_Range/](http://wheretoshoot.org/Find_Range/). Or do a web search for *shooting ranges*, *trap and skeet* or *sporting clays* in your area. Youth shooters can often get special rates, so be sure to ask. And have fun. It starts on the shooting range but really gets good when your young hunter drops a live bird from the sky this fall. 

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

BILL THORNLEY

# Chuck Revak Memorial Keeps Kids Fishing

## Continuing a legacy



DNR Warden Supervisor Dave Zebro goes over how to wear a life jacket with Edison Leckel of Spooner

Chuck Revak worked for the Department of Natural Resources in fisheries, but seldom, recalls his wife, Maureen, had time to fish himself. He was too busy helping kids.

"He was always baiting hooks, fixing lines—that's how it is when you fish with kids," she said.

And although Chuck passed away 2 1/2 years ago, on June 2 he continued to help children learn about and enjoy the outdoor activity of fishing at the Chuck Revak Memorial Kids Fishing Day in Spooner.

"It was started in honor of my late husband, Chuck," explained Maureen. "We wanted to honor him and continue his legacy."

Maureen and her children, Annabelle and Tyler, participated in the event. The banner featured photos of Chuck with his kids, enjoying fishing.

Partners in the annual event include the DNR and the Lakeland Family Resource Center. The Wisconsin Canoe Heritage Museum in Spooner also participated, bringing several vintage canoes and giving children rides.

Safety on the water is a big part of the event. DNR Warden Supervisor Dave Zebro was on hand, teaching the children about the importance of always wearing a life jacket when fishing or boating.

The Chuck Revak Memorial Kids Fishing Day coincides with The Family Festival and also Wisconsin's Free Fishing Days. The event annually takes place on the Yellow River Flowage in Spooner at the Spooner Veterans Memorial Park dock.

"Kids go through three stations," explained Maureen. "The DNR has casting poles, and they learn to cast.

Wardens go over safety and rules and then will tour the Tommy G. Thompson Fish Hatchery and learn fish identification."

Poles and bait are provided for the young anglers, and each child receives a gift. This year it will be a new rod and reel.

The little folks had a tremendous time learning about the great American pastime of fishing, riding out across the deep blue water in canoes, touring the fish hatchery and just being kids.

Chuck Revak would have liked that a lot. ☺

*Bill Thornley has worked for the Spooner Advocate since 1976. An award-winning photographer and writer, Bill has an intense passion for the outdoors, be it a deer stand in Wisconsin or on a snow-covered Wyoming mountain hunting elk and mule deer.*

### MURAWSKA, from page 4

you with a molder that is known to desire a particular species in a certain size slot. In some cases, it can be a big savings even over the price of a normal replica order.

Of course, one desires quality as well as value. Replicas have evolved over the years from molded fiberglass castings with thick, opaque fins and limited detail to some that have clear, thin fins, and no seams or flat areas and gills and inner mouth details molded from actual fish, right down to tiny upper palate teeth on pike and musky. Body conformations on top end replicas involve natural swimming poses, usually with some S-curve to them. (Severe up or downward banana curves are not natural.) Scale detail can be so crisp that the growth rings can be noted.

The molders capable of creating such superb castings to be finished and painted by someone specializing in fish are limited. There are plenty of the clunky, featureless examples out there that are done in assembly line fashion that will in no way resemble your fish or photograph. Top artists work from your picture and use many methods to enhance your trophy. Individual scales are often tipped with bright metallic pigments, iridescent powders, and subtly blended together with

skilled airbrushing. Properly done and displayed, they are true works of art, awkward facsimiles of a real fish.

Display options no longer involve just a wooden plank with a nameplate on it. Vibrant splash scenes and underwater habitat, including bait fish being pursued, all add to the art of the process.

### The Cost

The expenses involved in this typically run from \$15 per inch of fish length to over \$30 per inch of length. A typical average for good to excellent work will run about \$18 per inch of length. Most fish specialists have reputations that can be investigated on the Internet, and tasteful websites. Since these replications are shipped worldwide, there is no reason to go with somebody local. Do your homework, and seek the best. Ask directly who the taxidermist purchases replicas from. If they can show you a picture of the blank they will be working on, it may indicate a lot about quality.

By all means, work with artists whose credentials are sound and who live in the USA or Canada, if you are a citizen there. Agreeing to any fish work in a foreign country, particularly for large, saltwater species, will generally

not turn out to your liking once you arrive home. Work with a human with a name, not a company with stickers on a fleet of boats. Talk with your taxidermist personally about your needs.

### Entering Into The Contract

Most will accept a 50% deposit and take months and sometimes up to a year to return your fish. Be clear on any contractual items you sign from the start. Don't call them too often and ask how the fish is doing. Chances are it is in a line of projects waiting for completion taken in before your order. Very long turnaround times are not evidence that your fish is being given more care. In fact, it can be the result of poor business practices.

With all this in mind, shop and compare. If you can visit a showroom of the taxidermist's work, that is ideal. Enjoy the process and don't be in a rush. You may never again catch that fish of a lifetime! ☺

*Denny Murawska's outdoor musings have been a part of Wisconsin lore for more than 12 years. A world-respected fish taxidermist, Denny operates Angler's Art Fish Taxidermy and writes regularly on the subject. Contact Denny at 715.964.1159 or find him at artangler3030@genevaonline.com.*

### KIESOW, from page 6

No. I simply flatten it with my fly vise before tying. (I have a spring-loaded Regal.) That way, if the point is going to break, it will do so before I have spent a lot of time manipulating fur and feathers and an assortment of other materials into a fly with which I intend to catch fish.

That's it for today. Next issue we will discuss the bend, the shank, and the eye. Stay tuned.

### Remember

If you have questions, go to our website, [www.onwisconsinoutdoors.com](http://www.onwisconsinoutdoors.com), scroll down, and click on fly fishing. You can email your questions to me from there. Now, get out there, wet a line, and enjoy. See you in or on the river.

Keep a good thought! ☺

*Jerry enjoys all aspects of the outdoors. He is conducting fly fishing/tying classes at Riveredge Nature Center, Newburg, into September. To keep track of his classes and enjoy his photos and read some of his other writings, including his book, "Tales of The Peshtigo Putzer," and to see what else he is doing and where, check out his website at [www.jerrykiesowoc.com](http://www.jerrykiesowoc.com).*

TOM CARPENTER

# Summer Crappies

## *Eight strategies to finding the slabs*

### Wisconsin Fishing Reports.

OnWisconsinOutdoors.com/WisconsinFishing

In spring, crappies are a breeze. Silversides hit the shallows, everybody can find them, minnows dangle below bobbers and get engulfed by wide papery mouths, and fish fries run rampant across Wisconsin. Then something happens: waters warm, crappies head back out toward deeper water. Usually they suspend somewhere between bottom and surface. Fishing gets tougher. And there you sit with drowned minnow and empty fry pan.

Don't let the summertime crappie blues take you over this year. Put these eight strategies to work on your favorite crappie waters.

#### 1. Open Up

Once crappie spawning is over—when water temperatures pass the mid-60s—some fish will retire to the deeper edge of a natural lake's weedline, where you can find them on turns and points. But the biggest crappies head for the open water, where they suspend over deep water within 100 to 200 yards of rockpiles, weedy humps, gravel bars and other structure. Once you find them, be ready to move with the fish. They won't just sit there.

#### 2. Channel Your Energies

In reservoirs and flowages, look for crappies near the old river channel. The fish will hold right on the channel's edge. If you can find it, another reservoir/flowage hotspot is the intersection between a creek channel and the main river channel. Crappies like these edges because they often provide the only structure available on an otherwise featureless bottom.

#### 3. Go With A Little Flow

Gathered in the backwaters for



springtime spawning, river crappies can be easy to catch. But finding them in summer isn't hard if you know where to look. Crappies like a little current but not too much, so probe sloughs that have some current moving through and side channels with a light flow. The best side channels are the ones connected to backwater spawning areas. Deep eddies and outside bends in the main channel produce crappies too, where the current is gentle.

#### 4. Know Your Water

Crappies are very sensitive to light. In clear waters, such as natural lakes up north, your best bet for summer crappies is to fish early or late in the day or even at night (see tip number 8). A cloudy day is also a good day to launch a boat on a clear crappie lake. On the other hand, dingy or stained waters produce more midday action because the intense sunlight doesn't send crappies scurrying for the depths.

If you're relegated to daytime fishing, head for a river, reservoir or flowage and its darker water.

#### 5. Get Higher

Next time you catch a crappie, look at how its eyes are placed. They're very close to the top of its head. Veteran crappie chasers know that papermouths are more likely to swim *up* for a bait rather than down. So if you know where the fish are holding, try working a foot or two above that depth. If the fish are 18 feet, try fishing at 16 or 17 feet, maybe even 15 feet to start. When prospecting for fish, slowly work your way *down* from upper layers of water, not up from deeper water.

#### 6. Count On It

When fishing for crappies over deep water without a float—maybe you're using a jig, little spinnerbait, small beetle spin or tiny minnow plug—count as your lure sinks until you start your


retrieve. Try different counts. Once you start getting strikes, repeat that count for future casts. It's old-fashioned, but it sure works.

#### 7. Give 'Em a Slip

The standard, and still best, summer crappie rig is a basic slip-bobber set-up. Use good quality 6-pound monofilament line. Thread on a pre-made slip knot, bead and tall but slender slip bobber. Pinch on a split shot or two, just enough to make the bobber stand, and tie on a sharp size 6 hook. Crappies can be amazingly finicky, so make it a point to try and get the smallest, liveliest and shiniest minnows you can. The knot and slip-bobber let you fish from 5 to 30 or more feet down without changing rigs.

#### 8. Make Some Night Moves

Because they are so light-sensitive and because the water cools when the sun goes down, night is an excellent time to catch summer crappies. Hang a gas lantern from a metal pole or arm your rig up. The light draws insects, which lures crappies as well as minnows that also help attract crappies. Use a lighted float. Fish shallower—sometimes only a few feet below the surface, even over deeper water—because that's where the crappies' prey will be. Rig up several rods and have them waiting. That way, you can just grab a new outfit and get fishing again if a tangle occurs or you lose a rig.

Use these eight strategies to ensure good crappie fishing this and every summer. 

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

#### LUTHENS, from page 5


he would share, so I nearly went down face-first in the water in my haste to get to him.

He had hooked several trout on Sulphur mayfly imitations. He actually read the fly hatch chart from the Langlade gas station, while I had been busy just gloating over its discovery. Now he was taking smallmouth bass in a nice section of rapids. They were

hitting the streamers we'd been told about, and both of us had a fine time catching bass from the fast water.

A hailstorm finally chased us from the river and into the protecting cover of the cedars and hemlock. Some of the hail was the size of marbles, but the pines performed nicely. The hailstones making it through only stung a little.

Walking back out through the

pinetrees, it looked like it was snowing. Mist danced through the dark silhouettes of the trees. It made me think how lucky I was to be there. I was thankful to have been invited to fish with Joe—I mean Shawn. Call it a gas station or call it a fly shop. The names don't matter as much as the stories anyway. 

*John Luthens travels Wisconsin, visiting favorite trout waters and exploring back road country often from the family cabin, near the Bois Brule River in Douglas County. Fishing the Winnebago system is a favorite pastime. He chronicles his outdoor journeys from his home in Grafton, where he resides with his wife and two children. Contact him at Luthens@hotmail.com.*



DENNIS RADLOFF

## The Elusive Monsters Of Green Bay

### *Seeing—up close and personal—is beleiving*

While musky fishing with Dick Ellis recently, we were talking all things musky. At some point in the conversation the topic of “biggest musky you ever saw” came into play, and I proceeded to tell Dick about the biggest fish I ever saw. After recalling the event, Dick looked at me and said, “Denny boy, you have to write that for the next issue of OWO.” So, by request of the “boss” at OWO, here it is, the “Greatest musky I never caught.”

I had been fishing some of the tributary areas in the Sturgeon Bay region the summer of 2006 working my milk run with a string of decent success. Throughout July we had been seeing muskies, missing muskies, losing muskies, and catching muskies. As August approached our string of action was halted by wind; wind so strong I had to cancel two days in a row because the north winds were blowing at a constant 25-plus miles per hour, creating 6- to 8-foot rollers. Finally, on the third day, the winds backed off enough that the rollers were in the 2- to 4-foot range ... still pretty rough, but manageable enough that my guys for that day were willing to go for it. I remember being excited about the opportunities created by the strong winds from the past two days.

Due to the direction of the winds, there was a good chance that open water baitfish would be present on the deep weed edges of this small tributary bay. We would also have a chance of casting over the weeds that would otherwise be emergent, now having more of a submergent weed situation due to water getting stacked up from the wind and the weeds laying down due to the current.

We spent the morning casting over the tops of these weeds. This is usually a great pattern after strong winds like we just encountered, but in spite of

our best efforts, we didn't see a single musky all morning. We “retooled” and made some adjustments to try targeting the “deep weed edge” hoping to find some active muskies hanging in that location. I had both my clients get on the port side of the front deck of the boat with deeper running lures, and I positioned the boat right on the weed edge, with the starboard side of the boat facing the top of the weeds. As my clients worked lures into the deeper

time my lure was about halfway back to the boat, I noticed the “sting ray” was beginning to take the shape of a musky, and the size of this musky was making my 14-inch long buck tail look like a little #5 Mepp's in front of a big spring musky! Looking back I'd have to guess the 3-foot rollers, combined with the shallow clear water, was causing a weird refraction on the image of the musky making it expand and contract when I first noticed it.

*“... and the size of this musky was making my 14-inch long buck tail look like a little #5 Mepp's in front of a big spring musky!”*

water “crashing” the deep weed edge, I fished off the starboard back deck of the boat casting the weed tops just to keep a lure on that pattern. I really had no hopes of seeing anything casting the weed tops since my guys covered that pattern all morning; I really thought they would be pulling something off the deep weed edge.

An hour after working this pattern, I shot a long cast with my favorite “G-Train” buck tail up into the shallows. The water was very clear. I could see my buck tail coming the whole way on each cast. I always watch a few feet behind my lure when I can see it, because it's an ultimate thrill to see a musky strike or follow. I'll never forget the first thought I had that day when I saw the fish, “What am I looking at?”

Within the first 10 feet of my retrieve I could see what appeared to be a sting ray shaped object following my buck tail. As my buck tail continued its route towards the boat, this sting ray shaped object continued to stay right behind my lure. By the

As the musky was within clear view of the boat, and only inches behind my lure, I realized in an instant that I was watching the largest musky I have ever seen in my life ... only inches behind my lure. The sound of my racing heart was pounding in my ears. I whispered a warning to let my clients witness the monster as my lure reached the figure-8 stage of the retrieve.

The first thing that stood out to me was the eyeballs on this musky; they appeared to be the size of quarters, and the distance between the eyes was greater than any I have ever seen. There was literally less than 8 feet between the musky and me at this time. I'd like to say I made the greatest figure-8 in my life, and it wouldn't have mattered because the “beast” keep traveling in a straight line under the boat, almost as if my lure had only been traveling in front of the route she was going to take anyway. In reality, as soon as the musky disappeared under the boat, I stopped my figure-8 to turn around and looked over the port side of the boat to get another look at her as she came out the

other side. She never did, and while I stood there, it was occurring to me that I may have indeed just blown my chance at a record class musky. I know that big muskies don't always turn on the figure-8; sometimes they will go beyond to turn around and return to strike. Even if this is what she was doing, it didn't matter.

There I stood, dumbfounded, bewildered, dismayed, astonished, startled, shocked, and even frightened, with my musky rod in hand and my lure dangling uselessly from the rod tip. My clients, who seemed to be shocked by my shock, asked, “How big was that fish?” I just stood there wondering, “Did that just happen?” After what seemed an eternity, I finally fired a cast back at the now vacant shoreline, and while my lure was in midflight, there she was! With my lure flying through the air, I was looking down at the beast again as she was coming out from under the boat and making the return trip back to the spot she came from. Watching her depart, and while still only 10 feet away, the magnitude of the size of this fish was impressed upon me.

The enormous width of her head continued and carried throughout the width of her body. The height of her body was just as proportionate as the width, and what impressed me most was the girth of just the tail meat section alone. From the dorsal fin back to the tail seemed to carry the girth of any 38-inch class musky body that I have seen many times over my 18 year career of musky hunting. I'm sure there would not have been any chance that both of my hands would have fit around the tail meat. One final distinguishing factor I couldn't help notice was the coloration of the musky. This fish had an overall darker degree of color compared to the lighter

*continued on page 18*

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BILL SCHULTZ

# Kayak Fishing Wisconsin

## Kayak transport, great Wisconsin Kayak fishing spots



Steve Starr on the Wisconsin River.

When I'm working a show like Canoeopia or Paddlefest, or just answering questions from people interested in getting started in kayak fishing, I always ask if they've thought about transporting their kayak. Most sit-in kayaks weigh about 50 pounds, and sit-on-top fishing kayaks weigh 65 to 80 pounds. Self-propelled kayaks are typically a little heavier. So you need to think about transport, and not just transport from your home to the water, but transport from your vehicle to the actual launch point once at or near the water.

If you have a pickup truck with a large bed, you may be all set, but many of us drive something different. I drive a Subaru Outback and have Malone car racks when I want to put a kayak on the car, and I also have a Malone MicroSport kayak trailer, which is what I use most of the time. A number of companies make excellent roof racks, but many will need a second person to lift the kayak to the rack. A few racks, like the Malone SS Combo with the Stinger Loading System, have been designed to assist when loading alone. A trailer or truck bed is easier for one person to load the kayak, with both being just a few feet off the ground.

Some waters have launches where

you can drive your vehicle very close, but not all of them. Two people can carry most kayaks quite easily, but what about when you're alone? I've found the best way to get from vehicle to water is to use one of the very nice kayak carts on the market. These cost about \$100 and fit under the front of the kayak. A strap secures the kayak and you can easily push the kayak to the water and back again.

We're approaching the middle of the summer, and hopefully you've been out fishing in your kayak and having a great time. I've been lucky enough to have been out quite a few times and have caught a bunch of smallmouth and largemouth bass, which is what I target. You most likely have some great spots you enjoy, but let me give you a few of my favorites.

### Door County

Door County is tough to beat. There is great smallmouth bass fishing from the bays west of Sturgeon Bay all the way to the end of the peninsula and on Washington Island. What an incredible combination of unsurpassed beauty and the opportunity for excellent fishing! There are numerous locations to launch a kayak at the state parks, town launches and the many small roads the end at the water, where

you can launch and leave your car. (I've checked with the Door County Sheriff, and he said to be sure to pull off the road after launching.) The better smallie fishing is on the Green Bay side, but Lake Michigan at the northern reaches of the peninsula can also be very good.

### The Wisconsin River

The Wisconsin River from the headwaters to the confluence with the Mississippi can be tremendous for a variety of fish species. Along its entire length are hundreds of launches, parks and other locations where you can put your kayak in. I've fished stretches from Wisconsin Dells, Sauk City and Lone Rock. All were a great time, and those eagles are a wonderful bonus. One concern with river fishing, though, is having a vehicle waiting at the takeout. One solution is to take two vehicles. Another, which I've done, is to find someone and see if they'd be willing to follow you downriver a few miles and give you a ride back for \$15 or \$20.

### Madison Area

Madison is blessed with four lakes which all have great fishing and boundless opportunities for kayaking. I've spent most of my time chasing smallmouth and largemouth bass on Lake Mendota, but Monona, Wingra and Waubesa are all worth trying. And, all have many great launches which,

for a few dollars, you can launch your kayak and be reasonably close to good fishing.

### Waukesha County

Western Waukesha County has some wonderful lakes, with many that are just perfect for kayak fishing. Nagawicka Lake has a great launch and offers some excellent fishing for a variety of species. Beaver Lake has a carry-in only launch on Highway 83 and is loaded with many smaller bass and crystal clear waters. Others that I've fished and enjoyed are Upper and Lower Nemadji Lake, Lower Neshotah Lake, Silver Lake, Golden Lake, Moose Lake, North Lake, Pine Lake and Oconomowoc Lake. The Milwaukee River and Fox Rivers in Southeast Wisconsin offer miles of terrific kayak fishing. Check Google Maps and you'll find many more to explore and enjoy.

Throughout Wisconsin we have thousands of lakes and rivers that are ideal for those of us who love kayak fishing. In most cases, if the fish aren't biting, there are plenty of "bonuses," like eagles, blue herons, swans, kingfishers, deer, other wildlife and the simple beauty of wooded shorelines. <sup>©WO</sup>

Bill Schultz has caught thousands of smallmouth bass on the waters of Wisconsin. He is an active outdoor writer/speaker and can be reached at [www.smalliecentral.com](http://www.smalliecentral.com).



MIKE FOSS

# Saskatchewan Baiting Lessons

## A Wisconsin bear guide turns hunter

After a long game of cat and mouse with the two Saskatchewan boars unwilling to share the bait, the blond sow Bill Engler had waited for saw an opening and took it. Camera rolling to capture the confrontation and, hopefully, the kill, I stood above the bowhunter from Green Bay and felt our tree literally shake; the fever of the moment enveloped my good friend as “Honey Bear” emerged from the shadows and Bill began his draw.

As Wisconsin bear guide turned temporary hunter, this May 24 confrontation offered an unfamiliar view of a bear hunt in more ways than one—an experience that would allow me to better relate to the hunters who venture each spring into Bayfield County relying on my expertise and experience to bring the bears to them. Wisconsin hunters on average earn a harvest tag once every eight years. Our bear hunting is not a sport that lets the hunter get comfortable with yearly tags, and many feel the fever when they first meet those bears at the bait.

Regardless, our success rate at Northern Wisconsin Outfitters over a decade is over 95 percent with a near 100 percent shot opportunity. In the last few years alone our hunters have harvested a 639-pound bear, with bears in the 300- to 500- pound class certainly not common, but expected. There is a method to our baiting madness ... and success ... and it begins with diligence and effort.

This spring at the Wisconsin Deer Classic & Hunting Expo in Green Bay, I presented the seminar “Bear



Bill Engler of Green Bay and Wisconsin Bear and Deer Guide Mike Foss found a great hunt and the blond bear of a lifetime in Saskatchewan Canada in May and recommend the adventure for any hunter waiting eight years or more for their harvest tag here.

Addiction,” which included a segment on baiting techniques. We bait for an average of 20 hunters annually who hold vigil over our baits spread over 30 square miles of rugged Lake Superior country. We begin the baiting in May that will have the bears habitually returning well before the September season.

In the seminar I maintained that

bear baiting methods that are proven in Wisconsin may not be effective at all elsewhere. Big talk. When it came right down to it and we ventured north into Saskatchewan, Canada with my own bear tag to hunt with Bear Claw Outfitters, I couldn’t practice what I preached. How could such a lofty success rate change just because we crossed the border?

### ON THE COVER:

DNR warden recruits work with Wisconsin hunters running bear hounds in summer in preparation of the hunt to heighten their understanding of the sport. Read stories like these and Mike Foss’s *Diary Of A Wisconsin Bear Guide* beginning in July online at [OnWisconsinOutdoors.com/BearHunting](http://OnWisconsinOutdoors.com/BearHunting)

Months before the hunt it was difficult to listen to my Canadian guide; although I had to believe that he knew his own local trade, it was hard to believe that a Canadian bear’s diet could be so different from their Wisconsin cousin. All bears like sweets, of course, so why was Roger Eagles telling me that beaver and oats were the only menu items we would need? The answer was evident on day one of our week-long trip.

We had many stands from which to choose. Everywhere we traveled there was water and evidence of those bark-chewing engineers. The bears had simply adapted to an abundant, primary food source; beavers were the staple. Still, as Bill Engler opted not to make changes to his bait, I “went Wisconsin”; in addition to beaver and oats in one barrel, which is required for ground bait in Saskatchewan, I stocked another barrel with cookies, pastries and pie filling.

The first day I hunted, the sweets had hardly been touched; how rude of those Canadian bears. The beaver we hung in a tree was gone, and the oats barrel was almost empty. Roger Eagles said sweets are more effective in fall due to the lack of abundance of the primary spring food sources. Makes sense. Next time I will listen to my seasoned guide and leave the Wisconsin menu home.

Bayfield County is wilderness country. Saskatchewan, though, is big, beautiful and intimidating. If you’re not prepared, you may be in for the

*continued on page 25*

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JJ REICH

# The Reich Stuff

## Ontario lakers with Ben Beattie

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Walleyes are “Most Wanted” when fishing Ontario, especially if you are talking about shore lunch. The great northern nation also has boatloads of trophy smallmouth bass, plus piles of pike and muskie. However, a real hidden gem is lake trout!

Last June, my good friend and fishing guide Ben Beattie put some friends and me on a lake for a day of great lake trout fishing. We landed more than 50


lakers in about four hours. The next day we went back and did it again.

“Not a lot of guys key in on this species. But for those in the know, a day of chasing lake trout is always on the docket. Where I guide in Sioux Lookout, we’ve got a couple options for lake trout lakes,” explained Beattie. “Lake Minnitaki offers good numbers of fish, but it also has serious trophy potential. Big fish, over 40 inches, are caught every year. These monsters tip the scales around the 30-pound mark. That’s a fish-of-a-lifetime!”

“Early in the season, trolling is the way to get them. Long lines, planer boards and Dipsey Divers are all important tools when trolling for these fish. Spoons, inline spinners and minnowbaits take most of the fish when trolling,” said Beattie. “But as spring turns to summer, I prefer to vertical jig for them with 4-inch, white tube jigs. There’s nothing that compares to setting the hook in about 60 feet of water and battling a powerful lake trout from the depths with a jig pole!”

Ben is a fishing guide and outdoor writer based



out of Sioux Lookout in northwestern Ontario’s Sunset Country. Although Ben fishes for anything that swims, he dedicates most of his time to chasing walleye, muskie and lake trout. With famous Lake Lac Seul and many other lakes in his backyard, the fishing possibilities are endless. Learn more about him at [BenBeattieOutdoors.com](http://BenBeattieOutdoors.com). 

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

TOM CARPENTER

## Badger Birds: Pileated woodpecker

*Was that a hawk? An owl? They don’t cling to tree trunks, though. Hey, it’s a giant woodpecker!*


That’s a typical reaction when someone sees their first pileated (pill-ee-ated) woodpecker. These impressive but elusive woodland birds can fill Wisconsin forests, parks and treed neighborhoods with the loud, resounding pounding of their beaks as they dig into old trees for insects and larvae.

**Look** for a crow-sized bird with a wide wingspan. Pileateds fly with a flap-and-glide technique that is effective but not graceful. The body is black, with white striping on the face. The head sports a fiery red crest.

**Listen** for the hollow, staccato echoes a pileated woodpecker makes as it feeds. These big birds also make a ringing and deep *kuk-kuk-kukuk* call.

**View** the evidence that pileated woodpeckers leave behind—gaping holes and sometimes even a bit of “sawdust” on the ground below.

**Attract** pileated woodpeckers with suet. The processed kind is fine, but the real thing—fat and scraps direct from the butcher, or from a deer you cut up yourself—is even better (especially in fall and winter).

**Did you know** that a male pileated woodpecker wears a brilliant red mustache on his cheek, while a female’s mustache is black? 

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






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# County Teasers

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**Port Washington** celebrates summer, and we know how to play outdoors. A 30 mile paved bike trail runs right through town. Book a trip with a charter captain—the fishing this year has been awesome—**walk our beaches, or follow the walking tours.** Download our free mobile app! [Click on Ozaukee County.](#)

**Washburn County** is the perfect summer destination for spending a week at the lake, fishing, ATViing, and exploring the Northwoods. You'll find many great **lake front resorts, family campgrounds, B&Bs, hotels,** and more to relax and reconnect with family. For the music lover, be sure to check out the first annual **Northwoods Blues Festival**, and for the extreme athlete, don't miss the new **Savage Dash** at Jack Pine Savage Days. [Click on Washburn County.](#)

Hold onto your seat! Get ready for thrills at **"Churning Dirt" Nationals truck and tractor** pull at the Richland County Fairgrounds, July 21-22. Feeling creative? Visit the **Midwest Scroll and Saw Trade Show**, August 3-4, at the

Richland Center High School. Extreme to serene, we have it all! [Click on Richland County.](#)

**Iron County Heritage Festival**, July 27-August 12. Experience Iron County's past through **walking tours, museums, parade, garden tours, demonstrations, Loon Day, bazaars** and the **Paavo Nurmi Marathon**. Come experience Iron County's rich heritage ... it's alive today! [Click on Iron County.](#)

Hayward is home to **5 world record muskies**. Our area has over 200 lakes with outstanding fishing for trophy musky, northern, walleye, bass, crappie, and panfish in Wisconsin's beautiful northwoods. **Check out our weekly fishing report.** For a free Vacation Guide, call 800.724.2992 or [click on Sawyer County.](#)

Got fish? Sheboygan has a **hot Salmon fishery** going on right off our shores, and it's heating up with the area's summer festivals. We have **fish, brats, beer, and family activities**. A short hike off the interstate, follow the brat smoke. We got fish! Contact **The Wolf Pack** to enjoy that adventure with a special someone. [Click on Sheboygan County.](#)

As summer days heat up, so does the fun and excitement in **Clark County!** Check this out—4th of July Celebrations, Community Festivals, County Fair, **quilt shows, farmers markets, historical museums, bike races**, camping, hiking, swimming, fishing, canoeing, kayaking and ATViing on the best trails in Wisconsin. Visit us today! [Click on Clark County.](#)

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With school right around the corner, it's time to **take a fishing trip to Lake Geneva**. Lake Geneva offers the best fishing in Southern Wisconsin. For **guide parties**, contact Dave Duwe's Guide Service at 608.883.2050. You won't regret it. **Click on Walworth County.**

Get the most out of summer with a getaway in the **Stevens Point area**, in the heart of Wisconsin. Reel in walleyes, muskies, northern pike, catfish, and bass. **Hike the 30.5-mile Green Circle Trail** or tour one (or all) of the breweries (complete with a taste!). Plan your getaway today. **Click on Portage County.**

Come and explore **Price County** in Northern Wisconsin ... We've saved a place for you! You'll find **low fishing pressure on area lakes and rivers**, light traffic on our motorized and non-motorized trails, fun family events,

along with **affordable lodging** and services, all in our quiet neck of the Northwoods. **Click on Price County.**

Summer is in full swing and so is the fun in **Marinette County!** Try our new **zip-line tour** or take in one of our many music festivals, movies in the park or concerts in the park! For more on your **four season destination** for outdoor recreation, **click on Marinette County.**

Challenge yourself with **World Class Walleye or trophy Muskie fishing**. Whether by sail, paddle or motor, the rivers, streams and 431 lakes in **Douglas County** are a great place for playtime and pleasure boating, too. Try tenting or RV camping in the **Brule River State Forest, Pattison, and Amnicon Falls State Parks**. **Click on Douglas County.**

**July 28 is River Bluff Daze in Ferryville** and that means the

Antique Tractor Pull, Farmers Market, Kids Games, great food and prizes. Fireworks on the River at dusk. Music at Sportsman's Bar & Grill, food specials at all of the restaurants. **Great Celebration** and you are invited! **Click on Crawford County.**

**Enjoy Polk County in the Summer!** You won't believe all of the lakes (over 400!) and don't forget the beautiful **St. Croix National Scenic Riverway**.

Don't want to be in the water? How about **two State Bicycle Trails**—the Gandy Dancer Trail and the Stower 7-Lakes Trail ... or hiking in two State Parks— Interstate Park and Straight Lake Park. Stop in at the Polk County Information Center in St. Croix Falls for maps and more info! **Click on Polk County.**

**Minocqua**—find out why *Field & Stream* named us the **#5 fishing town in the U.S.** Minocqua is the kind of place where you **fish all day and sit on the porch at night** to watch the sun set over the lake." Yeah, that's life our way. **Click on Oneida County.**

Adams County Petenwell and Castle Rock Parks, on the **2nd and 4th largest lakes in Wisconsin**, are open year round for camping with heated shower/restroom facilities, game room, concessions, swimming beach, boat launch, and fishing. Petenwell Park also offers **ATV camping with immediate trail access**. **Click on Adams County.**

During the cold weather, come out and try our sheltered **5-stand and trap fields! Stay warm and dry all winter**. Waukesha Gun Club is the only club we know of in the area with these amenities. **Click on Waukesha County.**

Kristine James at **First Weber offers fantastic Lake Homes, Country Homes and Land Values!** You've got to see 'em to believe 'em. **Click on Waushara County.**

Now is the time stay at **Lakeview Log Cabin Resort on scenic Lake DuBay!** Here you can play in the water; explore the outdoors; fish for walleye, bass, pike, musky, catfish and panfish; shoot the breeze around the campfire; and relax in a cozy cabin. Plan your getaway today! **Click on Marathon County.**

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**RADLOFF**, from page 10

color patterns common to the fish in the region. The darker color was comparable to other darker open water fish I have boated in the past when trolling the deeper open water adjacent to this particular bay.

While I burned my lure back towards the fish in hopes of a last chance encounter, it became apparent it was all in vain. I watched the beast swim away with nothing but a waypoint on my GPS to mark the spot of a chance encounter of an open water giant. I never did see that fish again. I have fished that spot every time I am in that area and I have CPR'd many muskies from that spot since then, but I have never again seen the "big one."

I believe that was surely an open water giant that moved in with the strong winds and bait fish to take a brief feeding opportunity before returning to open water.

I have told this account to many people since, and they all ask, "How big do you think that fish was?" In all honesty, I cannot even begin to imagine. I know it's the biggest musky I have ever seen. I know it's bigger than the biggest musky I have ever had in my boat, which occurred on November



Mike Venardi holding a 53 3/4" musky that weighed 46 pounds and 7 ounces.


14th, 2009. Longtime client Mike Venardi caught a 53-3/4", 46 pound 7 ounce musky in the lower bay. I have had several other low 40-pound class fish in the boat over the years, and the

beast that followed me on that late July 2006 day was easily 10 pounds heavier, an easy mid-50 pound class fish, and well over the mid 50-inch mark for length.

Just think about that for a minute or two. Take that fish, in the fall with fully developed spawn sacks pushing it into the upper 50-pound range, and then throw four Whitefish at 3 pounds each into her belly after a good feeding binge. We're looking at a legitimate world record fish in the upper 60-pound bracket!

I believe the musky I saw that day was a record caliber fish. Two years later I had another experience at another destination in the same region under the same circumstances after multiple days of strong winds. That's two record class fish sightings.

Since then I have been spending more time trolling the open waters of Green Bay. Maybe with a little luck one of these days I might just be fortunate enough to be submitting pictures of a Green Bay musky worthy of changing the history books!

To be continued. 

Captain Dennis Radloff operates Sterling Guide Service. He guides on the waters of Green Bay and Southeastern Wisconsin seven days a week April through November. Contact Dennis through his website [sterlingmusky.com](http://sterlingmusky.com) or at 262.443.9993.

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JOEL KUNZ

# On Wisconsin's Rivers

## Summer sun and river fun

When it comes to summertime, water plays a big role in what people enjoy doing. Swimming, boating, and other water bourn activities dominate the area I live in this time of year, and for good reason. We have plenty of water and a diversified number of ways to enjoy it. Let's take a look. From Shawano south, the Wolf River offers a number of family fun opportunities. There are numerous canoe and kayak outfitters cropping up in the area that offer everything you need to enjoy a day on the water. Float tubes are popular too, with a lazy day on the river enjoying the quiet float trip, surrounded by Wisconsin's natural beauty being the reward. Trips vary from a few hours to all day, depending on the outfitter. Tubes and life jackets can be rented for a nominal fee, so all you need is a plan and some sunscreen.

You can choose to bring your own canoe or kayak and allow the outfitter to drop you off and pick you up or help you stage your vehicle at the end

point of the trip. That service is also available on the Embarrass River, where boating and angling pressure during the summer are almost nonexistent. With numerous access locations upstream of New London, it's pretty easy to plan a day's adventure. Again, outfitters can take you to your chosen drop off point, and you can spend the day paddling back to your awaiting vehicle or planned pick up by the outfitter. Information on this type of summer fun is available on my website at [www.lifeonthewolf.com](http://www.lifeonthewolf.com).

Don't forget the area's great summer fishing. Walleye, smallmouth bass, largemouth bass, northern pike, and catfish are plentiful in the Wolf River during the summer months. Even at what is typically the lowest water levels of the year, there are still plenty of areas on the river that are well over 20 feet deep. In addition, there are artesian flows, springs, and tributaries that continue to provide fresh water. With a plethora of baitfish and other forage in the system, it is easy to understand why

there is such good fishing potential.

The emerging weeds and places where the backwaters and bayous meet the main river are good spots to look for fish. Sandbars that drop off into deep water also provide good ambush points for awaiting fish. I like to pitch a jig at flooded weeds and drag it back slowly, letting it drop into the deep water. The fish may be right against the weeds or laying somewhere along the drop-off waiting for food. Crawlers and plastics do well, but I prefer a nice medium-sized leech. I rig it on an Odd'ball jig with a small piece of GULP or Power Bait rigged on the shaft of the hook rigged to cover the barb. This will keep your presentation pretty much snag-free and let you work some of the woody areas that may hold fish. The Embarrass is quite good for summer fishing. Walleye, smallmouth bass, and catfish would be my main targets, and, once again, there is plenty of fish holding habitat and deep water for the fish to use. A jig and leech is my "go



John VanMersbergen of Menomonee Falls with a nice summertime Wolf River walleye. Photo by Joel "Doc" Kunz.

to" bait, but don't forget to bring a few spinnerbaits. I like double willow leaf baits in silver and white but will bring a few dark colored baits too. I prefer the brighter baits because of the dark stained water, but due to the number of

*continued on page 24*

ELLIS, from page 3

Because of the high protein, oily, soft-rayed ciscoe baitfish, a musky here, Radloff said, will weigh-in much heavier than a cousin of the same length pulled from another southeastern gem, Pewaukee. He calls Okauchee "well-laid out" for muskies and other fish species including largemouth bass, pike and crappies. "Walleyes are difficult to find but if you can find them, they are very big," he said.

Milfoil is the primary vegetation, although cabbage and pond weed can still be found in some areas. Muskies often suspend over open water and drop back down to deep breaks until fall.

"Summer is the toughest time to fish Okauchee," Radloff said. "The recreational traffic is heavy. Water temperatures can be 80 to 85 degrees, which is hard on fish when you're pulling them up from 20 or 25 feet and a 10-degree water temperature change."

Early fall fish become more active and accessible on Okauchee. Moving from suspending in deeper summer waters off of points or secondary drop-offs where they're more difficult to find, those muskies are prompted by the change in water temperatures to return and utilize the weedbeds as an "ambush element."

Big fish become active with cooling water temperatures, and the trophy fish potential is good because these fish in part forage on the ciscoe. Although this is a 1000-acre lake, in early Fall it "fishes smaller." The muskies as a rule do not use the shallow bays, and very big fish are caught annually on

Okauchee in the late September/October time frame.

Okauchee can also draw heavy competition from other anglers despite its "temperamental" personality and clear water that makes it difficult to fish. The more knowledge, the better the opportunity for success. Radloff brought an understanding of the lake, a unique teaching ability and a defined game plan that would make every cast a potential winner.


Ultimately, we would lose three fish, each of which never stayed on for longer than the strike and a count of two. We had seen more than enough to return again, especially when the cooling temperatures of early fall reminds us that Okauchee is waiting.



Dennis Radloff is silhouetted against an early morning Okauchee sky June 14.

"Okauchee is a good lake to fish muskies from the opener to closing; spawn, post-spawn, early summer, peak summer, early fall and fall staging when they begin to stage adjacent to the areas where they will spawn the following spring," Radloff said. "The first week or two in June can be so great. Sometimes you can find a fish holding on every point. There's heavy pressure but people are pretty good; they co-habitat well. And October is great."

Those three strikes on Okauchee didn't leave us "out"—just that much closer to a fish like the one that still haunts Radloff's dreams. Working deep water Radloff had told me another musky tale about the largest fish he has ever seen on Green Bay. It was so hair-raising that I made Radloff vow to write the story in his column for this July-August issue of On Wisconsin Outdoors. Look for it.

It's scary-good. 

Dick Ellis is publisher of On Wisconsin Outdoors. Read Dick's blog on the website at [OnWisconsinOutdoors.com](http://OnWisconsinOutdoors.com).

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MIKE YURK

# Bassology

## Fishing the weeds

**W**hen you find weeds, you will find bass. It is that simple. Last summer three of us were fishing, and as we were casting over or around weeds, we caught fish. But as soon as we hit a barren spot where there were no weeds, we never got a strike.

Especially in summer, weeds are important to bass for several reasons. First of all, they provide cover for bass that protects them from sunlight. Minnow and other forage will be attracted to weeds for protection which always bring in game fish such as bass. The weeds will not only provide a steady supply of bait for bass but also an ideal place to ambush them. For bass, weeds are a win-win situation.

However, weeds pose a number of challenges for fishermen. The basic problem is how to get baits to the bass in weeds without hanging up and fouling the hooks or enticing bass to come out of the weeds to hit their baits. Since weeds hold so many bass, it is imperative to find a way to get to them.

I have found that the solution to catching bass in the weeds is a matter of choosing the right baits. Obviously, deep running crankbaits, which is one of my favorite baits, just won't work, since they will do nothing more than hang up on all that green stuff.

Here are a handful of baits that I have found that work well in, around, and over weeds, particularly on summer bass.

One method is working right

on top of the water. Any variety of topwater baits will do well over weeds. Some of my favorite hard baits are the Heddon Torpedo, the Rebel Pop-R and the Storm Rattlin' Chug Bug. I am not sure that color matters, since I think that the fish are reacting to movement more so than color. Regardless, my two pick colors for the Torpedo are Baby Bass and Bull Frog. With the Pop-R and Chug Bug, I go for anything natural looking, like a shad or a minnow or for something silver in color. With all the topwater baits it pays to have a couple of baits in fire tiger color or with some chartreuse in it, especially if the water is dirty and dingy.

Hard body topwater baits work best if there is a foot or two of water over the weeds. In a situation where the weeds come right up to the surface or close to it, however, those hard baits will start to hang up on the weeds. I suggest going to soft plastic topwater baits where the hooks are buried in the body of the lure. There are a number of soft bodied topwater baits, but my favorite is the Scum Frog. My preferred colors for them are black, yellow and anything that has green in it that could replicate a frog.

There are some hard body crankbaits that work over the top of weeds, specifically if the weeds are a couple of feet under the surface. They are a series of crankbaits that are designed to dive no farther than a foot under the surface. The three that I like include the Bandit Foot-Loose,

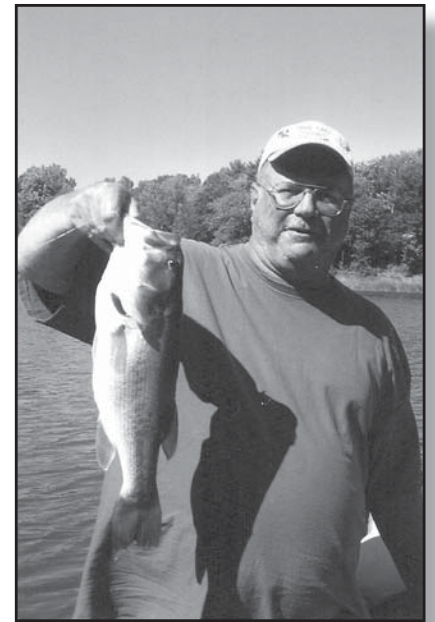
the Storm Sub Wart and Mann's Baby 1-Minus. Work them right across the weeds and watch the bass come tearing out after them. I try to use minnow-type colors, but, again, I think the fish are just reacting to the movement of the bait. I have found that the baits have a very erratic movement in the water which triggers strikes.

The next series of baits that work well over the top and even into the weeds are spinner baits and the ChatterBait. They are ideal for working around weeds as they have only one hook. But more importantly, they are extremely effective. Although color should not matter, I only use white. When I started bass fishing many years ago, a wise old fisherman told me that with spinner baits, I could use any color that I wanted as long as it was white. Since I use ChatterBaits like I would a spinner bait, I have stuck with the white color for them as well.

Another great lure for weeds is weedless spoons. The Johnson Silver spoon has always been my first choice in weedless spoons. I use the ¼- and ½-ounce sizes. There are a number of different colors for the Johnson Silver Spoon and even more colors are available in the imitation Silver Spoon-like baits. For me, the silver color, which was the first color the Johnson Silver Spoon was offered in, is still my favorite. However, the gold and black are my next two chosen colors. I always add an Uncle Josh pork frog or bass strip to it as well for more movement.

Of course you can't talk about fishing the weeds without mentioning plastic worms. Plastic worms can be worked over the top, on the edges of weeds and right into the weeds. I like to use sinking works and rig them Texas style. With the hook buried into the body of the worm, they become weedless. Green sparkle and black and blue are my pick colors, but whatever is your individual favorite cover should work just fine.

One of my preferred techniques for fishing weeds is to look for pockets in the weeds that are a little more open and in which the weeds are not as dense. When using spinner baits, the ChatterBait, spoons and plastic worms, I like to cast beyond the pocket and



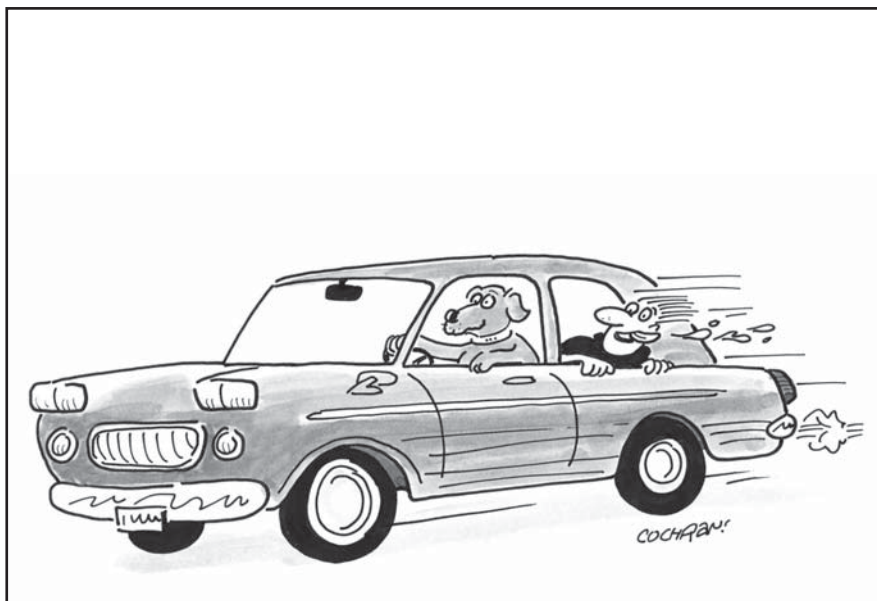
Bass like the one that Mike Yurk is holding can be taken by fishing in the weeds.

***"I have found that the solution to catching bass in the weeds is a matter of choosing the right baits."***

work my bait over the weeds to the pocket. Once the bait is in the pocket, stop retrieving and just let it fall back. If there are bass on the edge of that pocket, it seems they cannot resist a falling, fluttering bait of any kind. I think it looks to them like bait fish in distress, and that will usually trigger a strike.

Do not be dismayed by weeds, especially in summer when it seems that many lakes are covered in them. Having this handful of baits will get those bass out of the weeds and into your boat. *WO*

Mike Yurk began writing about the outdoors for newspapers in central Wisconsin in the late 1960s. During the past 40 years he has published more than 600 articles in national and regional outdoor publications. He has published five books, both fiction and nonfiction, on outdoor subjects. He is a retired Army officer and lives in Hudson, Wisconsin, near to some of the best bass fishing in the country. Contact Mike at [bassinmajor@yahoo.com](mailto:bassinmajor@yahoo.com).



DON KIRBY

# Waterfowl Banding

## *An opportunity to get involved*

For many hunters who pursue ducks or geese, harvesting a bird that has been banded (having a serial-numbered metal or plastic ring placed on a leg or neck) is a special memory, a very unusual occurrence which adds a unique trophy to a day's hunt. Most hunters probably don't give much consideration to how those birds got banded or what the process entailed.

Well, wonder no more! Here in Wisconsin, over the course of a couple of cycles during the next two months, wildlife managers will be working all around the state to capture and band thousands of ducks, and you could be involved.

Last August, my son Blake and I, at the invitation of WWA Board Treasurer, Bruce Urben, joined more than a dozen other folks in the pre-dawn hours, swatting mosquitoes at Collins Marsh in Manitowoc County. We were awaiting the "firing of the net," where a rocket-propelled fine mesh cargo net, more than 40 yards long and 20 yards deep, is sent over a large flock of assorted ducks as they congregate in a mowed area near a pond, feasting on the corn bait left for them the night before. On our morning, more than 670 ducks were captured in the effort!

After the blast, we all hurried to our vehicles and proceeded to the capture area, where we worked as part of a team that individually removed the quacking ducks from the netting, presenting them to a line-up of biologists to document their species and sex. Just prior to allowing them to set wing, they were banded into the morning sunrise.

Our crew of happy volunteers was a real melting pot: retired seniors, children as young as 8 or 9 years old with their parents, teens like my son, and more than a few of us who chose to take a morning off of work to come "work" with this team to help the study of these great migratory birds—through the banding effort.

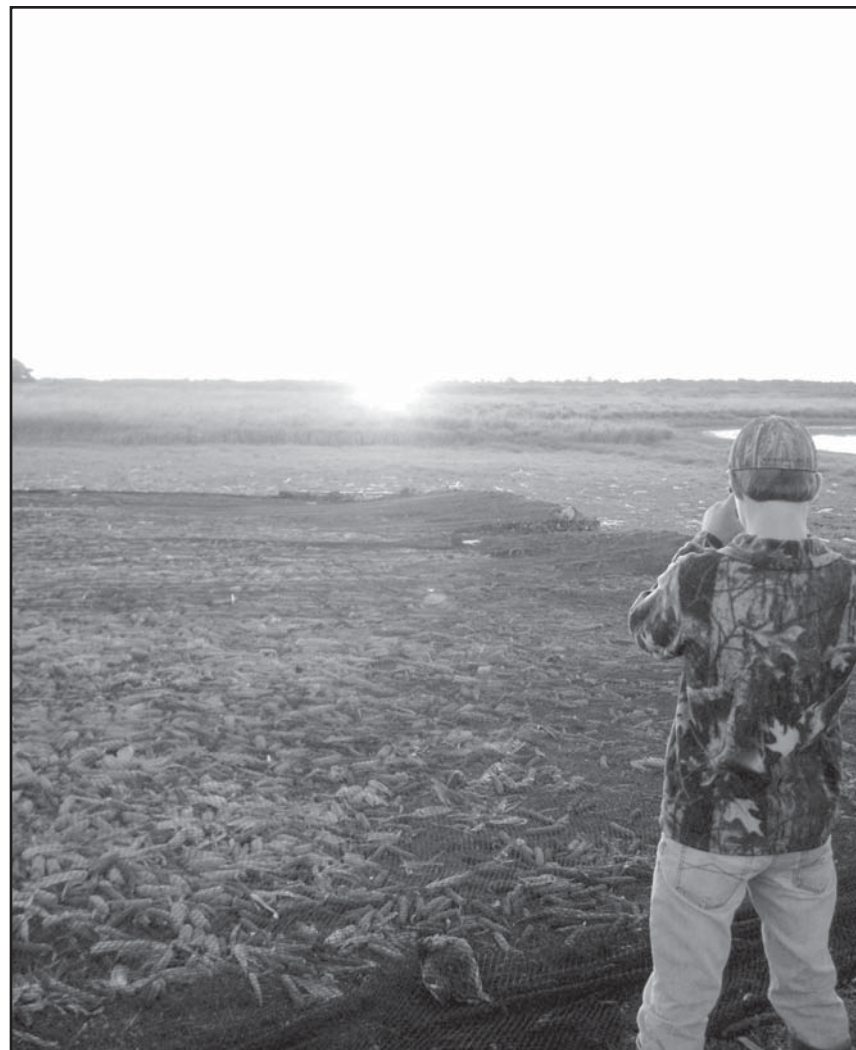
My son and I got to handle nearly three dozen ducks each, the majority of our birds in the net being mallards and wood ducks, with a few other species being captured at the same site on different days than our visit. As we held the birds firmly, their wings tucked close to their bodies to prevent an inadvertent premature fly-off, I was amazed at how hot their little bodies were!

Back to the science. After these birds are banded, the information taken is recorded in a database so that later on, if the birds are recaptured in another banding effort or if they are harvested by a hunter, who then reports the band, scientists can determine information about the migration based upon the site of origin, the recovery site, and the amount of time in between. Many bands include information on how to report data, but modern hunters with smartphones can save this information on the Bird Banding Laboratory to report bird bands: [www.reportband.gov](http://www.reportband.gov) or 1.800.327.BAND (2263). If you report a band online, you'll receive a certificate that tells all the information about the bird's original banding, including when and where it was banded.

If you are a waterfowler, a bird-

## More Ducks.


[OnWisconsinOutdoors.com/WaterfowlHunting](http://OnWisconsinOutdoors.com/WaterfowlHunting)



A rocket-propelled net captured this flock of ducks for examination and banding.

lover, or even if you are simply interested in the fieldwork of wildlife management, you would find this opportunity to participate as a volunteer to be very rewarding. Numerous state wildlife areas have banding parties like the one I participated in last August and in which you could too. To find out where you can participate in your area, contact your local DNR wildlife biologist. Even if they don't do this sort of work in their area, they'll know who does and will be able to get you on the right path. In many communities, the local chapter of the Wisconsin Waterfowl Association has volunteers who help out in these efforts, in addition to our habitat and youth education work, on an annual basis. If you'd like to find out if there's a chapter in your area that engages in this volunteer effort,

check out [www.wisducks.org](http://www.wisducks.org) or contact me through the website.

As a duck hunter myself, I can tell you that if you choose to volunteer, you'll almost certainly learn more about your quarry, enrich your appreciation for your sport, and have the chance to share an amazing opportunity with a young person in your life. Don't delay. With this year's mild winter and warm spring, goose banding activities (which normally occur in late June), ran about 10 days earlier than normal. Duck banding may see similar early action. Schedules are normally prepared about two to three weeks in advance and can be weather dependent. Make a plan to give waterfowl banding a try today! 

Don Kirby is Executive Director for the Wisconsin Waterfowl Association at [www.wisducks.org](http://www.wisducks.org).



## Want more fine reading on Wisconsin fishing?

• Gary Engberg shows you how to target Lake Winnebago's suspended walleyes.

• John Luthens finds Big Magic on that same big lake wading with a flyrod at the High Cliff State Park.

• Darrell Pendergrass's son Jack steals Darrell's best fishing buddy while the old man gets stuck with a list of "Queenie's" chores.

[WisconsinOutdoors.com/InlandFishing](http://WisconsinOutdoors.com/InlandFishing)

S. WILKERSON

# Surplus Firearms

## The lure of forgotten firearms



***“Why wouldn’t future gun collectors go out of their way to find real pieces of Americana, like the single shot Richland shotgun that Great Grandpa would have had handy when feeding the chickens?”***

Unlike automobile collectors, most serious gun collectors turn their noses up at firearms that have been restored in any way, shape or form. Fanatical gun collectors are also not interested in anything that rates less than 95 percent perfect condition. Of course, not every gun is collectible, even if it is new in the box with all of the requisite paperwork. Pristine Colts, Lugers and Winchesters will probably always be collectible. Well-worn Iver Johnson .32 caliber “hammer-the-hammer” revolvers and single shot shotguns probably never

will be.

I sometimes wonder if maybe some of these old, mostly forgotten firearms should be considered desirable pieces of American history, and, therefore, collectible. A still new-in-the box, pre-war Model 94 Winchester is, without a doubt, a thing of grace, beauty and hand fitted craftsmanship. It is also, in many ways, devoid of all soul and character.

Pristine, collectible guns are a joy to behold. As I grow older, however, I’m beginning to better appreciate more well-worn specimens. Let me start with one that got away. Gun show buddy Toothpick Jim acquired a worn, but obviously well-cared for Model 94 Winchester dating from the 1940s. I would have rated it at least 85 percent because—horrors!—it had obviously spent a lot of time in deer camps during its day. Based on the wear patterns of its wood and metal, this gun was carried for many miles over the years while its owner tramped across the woods, swamps and fields of (probably) northern Wisconsin. It had served someone very well over the decades, and it was rewarded with proper care. The owner of that gun was probably a historical relic in his own rights and the likes of which we may never see again: a middle class factory worker from a union shop who could afford a Winchester. In perfect condition, still in the box, with its original hang tags and literature, a Model 94 of that vintage would have been worth three times the amount that TJ sold it for at a recent gun show.

More often than not, we can only speculate on the history of old, used guns, like I did with the “deer camp” Winchester 94 previously described. As for vintage guns in perfect condition, they often have a common past: they were bought as birthday, Christmas, or anniversary presents by wives for their wealthy husbands.

Quite often, the guns of the rich were nothing more than trinkets

## More Firearm Columns.

[OnWisconsinOutdoors.com/Firearms](http://OnWisconsinOutdoors.com/Firearms)

among so many that their new owner never even bothered to wipe off the factory grease after the one time he took it out of the box. After he croaked, a very common scenario played out. One of his children was charged with eventually bringing the long forgotten Colt, Winchester, or Luger that was found in Dad’s closet to a gun shop, where it changed hands and was eventually bought by someone who appreciated it.

High-end collectible guns can be a good investment. I’m beginning to think that as our nation becomes almost totally urban in fact and philosophy, perhaps old, weathered firearms from the past might become collectible in their own right. The idea of keeping an inexpensive, single shot shotgun in the barn for protection or

targets of opportunity, like a pheasant or rabbit for supper, is totally alien to most of the population. Good grief, people now collect old watering cans. Why wouldn’t future gun collectors go out of their way to find real pieces of Americana, like the single shot Richland shotgun that Great Grandpa would have had handy when feeding the chickens?

Any worn Richland shotgun found at a gun shop or show for \$100 or so probably served a much more productive life than any new-in-the-box Colt of the same era. If nothing else, the Richland deserves some respect. I don’t know that any vintage NIB gun really does. *WO*

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



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LEE GATZKE

## NextBuk Outdoors

### Taking summer inventory



*Glassing during summertime in the evening is a good time to catch deer on their feet out in the open.*

The summertime heat was getting to me. I'm not wild about 90 degree-plus temps; they make me wilt. I prefer to be active early and late in the day, when temperatures are cooler, so it's no surprise to me that deer do likewise.

Deer get active once the sun draws a bead on the horizon. Leaving their day beds to go out for a drink and a bite to eat, their activity is about to come to a peak for the day. Does and fawns feed for short periods throughout the day, but come sunset, they, and bachelor groups of bucks, start to actively feed. Now is the time to catch them on their feet in the open.

A pair of binoculars and a spotlight accompany me as I travel the back roads on summer evenings in search of deer. Most of the evening I remain in my pickup truck while glassing from the road. Some feeding areas are not visible from the road, so I'll hike into them on foot, before sunset, to glass them.

Glassing is my preferred method of finding deer as they feed, but many times I will see more deer when shining. A note of caution about shining: be sure to consult your hunting regulations for legal shining hours and never carry any weapons in your vehicle or on your person while

shining. Shining is an ethical and legal activity when following the rules. Shining is also an incredibly effective scouting tool.

While shining, expect to be questioned by any law enforcement officer cruising the same back roads you do. They will want to verify that you are compliant with the regulations. They are just doing their job, and I'm glad to cooperate with them, as I see shining as a valuable scouting tool that is a privilege.

Shining has been banned in some areas because it has been abused by a few people who felt the rules didn't apply to them. Other places, like Federal Refuges, do not allow shining, so it is wise to check with the local or township officials in each of your hunting areas if you have any doubts about it being allowed there.

During my evening travels I pay particular attention to areas where I am able to hunt and also glass and shine neighboring properties. I want to take inventory on any deer that is on or close to my hunting areas. Come hunting season, the "neighbors' deer" often show up on the properties I am hunting, so it helps to know of their existence also.

As I stated before, some spots can only be glassed by walking to them on

foot, so I douse myself with bug spray and walk to a vantage point where I can glass the crop field, CRP ground, or clearcut. When I walk into an area to glass, I play the wind and stay tight to cover, just the same as if I were hunting

development. This causes deer to relocate or at least spend time in areas they ignored previously.

Glassing and shining reveal useful places to set up trail cameras, especially in feeding areas. I find it easy to access

### Shining is another effective method of taking inventory of local deer, especially the mature ones.

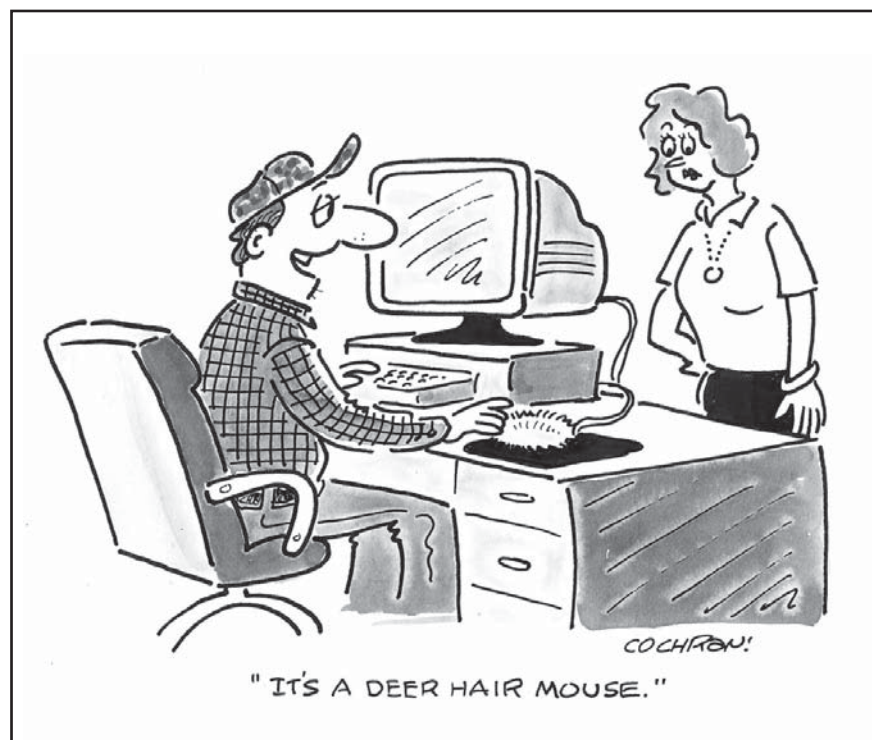
it. I don't want to spook any deer while glassing, because if they know they're being watched, they relocate or get nocturnal. In either case it makes it more difficult to monitor them if they know I'm there.

As evening gives way to nighttime, it's time to break out the spotlight. It's very common to glass all your spots and see only a few deer, then go back to them just after nightfall, shine the same places, and see a lot of deer. It's also customary to see the more mature deer while shining. I like to keep track of the bucks I glass and shine, as I notice patterns that develop. The type of crop or browse deer prefer will change seasonally as plants grow and become attractive to deer at different times during the particular plants'

feeding areas without spooking deer. If done during the middle of the day, this allows me to set up and check trail cameras unnoticed by deer.

Summertime glassing, shining, and trail cameras typically show me 90 percent of the deer I'll be hunting in the fall. That inventory lets me set realistic goals of what type of buck to go after come hunting season. No use setting a goal of killing a four-year-old buck if there isn't any where you can hunt. Taking inventory in this way helps me get through the off-season and stokes the fire for the upcoming one. *WG*

*Lee Gatzke is a member of NextBuk Outdoors, creators of tactical deer hunting videos. Gatzke can be reached at [www.nextbukoutdoors.com](http://www.nextbukoutdoors.com).*



SUZETTE CURTIS

## Recipes By Suzette

### Recipes from the freezer



Place venison into zippered plastic bag. Add flour, salt, pepper, onion powder, and garlic powder. Toss to coat and set aside.

Heat oil in large skillet over high heat. Add venison and sauté two minutes on each side. Remove chops from pan and set aside on platter.

While still on high heat, scrape bottom of pan and slowly add cranberry juice. Bring to a boil; reduce heat to simmer. Return chops to pan, cover and simmer 5 to 10 minutes until meat reaches desired doneness. Serve with the sauce.

### George Curtis' Favorite Fish

- 1 ½ pounds Whitefish or Walleye fillets
- 2 T. butter
- ½ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 3 T. mayonnaise
- 1 T. lemon juice
- 1 T. minced garlic
- 1 tsp. onion powder
- ¼ tsp. white pepper
- 2 T. chopped fresh basil

Melt butter in a small bowl; then add remaining ingredients except basil. Mix well; set aside.

Spray jelly roll pan with cooking spray. Arrange fillets on pan, skin side up. Place fish under broiler for 3 minutes. Remove pan from oven, turn fillets over, and spread Parmesan mixture over the top of each fillet. Return fish to oven and broil another 3 to 4 minutes until topping is bubbling and beginning to brown.

Before serving, sprinkle fresh basil over the top of each fillet.

### Turkey Legs

- 2 wild turkey legs
- 1 can chicken broth
- 1 large onion, chopped
- ¼ cup water
- ¼ cup cornstarch
- ½ tsp. white pepper
- 2 tsp. Worcestershire sauce

Place onion in bottom of slow cooker and arrange turkey legs over top. Pour chicken broth over all. Cook all day on low setting.\*

Once turkey is cooked, remove from slow cooker. Turn slow cooker up to high heat. Place cornstarch and water in small jar with tight fitting lid; shake well to mix. Slowly pour cornstarch mixture into slow cooker, stirring constantly. Cover and let cook for 5 to 10 minutes until mixture thickens. Add pepper and Worcestershire. Serve over turkey legs.

\*NOTE: This is really better with a pressure cooker, but I can't bring myself to use one as of yet. I have this terrible idea that it will blow up in my kitchen, so I take the chicken's way out and use my slow cooker.

*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)*

KUNZ, from page 19

crayfish in the system, orange and black combos work as well.

Plastic tube baits, crawfish, and other typical smallmouth bass patterns will catch fish. Stink bait is always good for the channel cats, but if you are after some rod and reel action for Mississippi Bullheads (the local name for Flathead Catfish), then you are going to need some live bait. Make sure to check local regulations for size and bag limits on all species, especially the Flathead, which have strict limits in place to help protect what was an overfished resource. With limits and rule changes in place for setliners, the Flathead are on their way back to being king of the river here on the Wolf.

Get the fishing boat out of the garage or plan a day floating the Wolf or Embarrass River right here in northeast Wisconsin. It's a short trip that will be rewarded with the nature around you. You'll see plenty of song birds, eagle, and osprey, as well as the occasional deer, fox, or beaver, along the shoreline. Not the fast water of the upper Wolf, prepare for a lazy, hazy, crazy day of summer. If you are more into boating, waterskiing, and pulling a large tube behind the boat, then head to Winneconne and Fremont, where the lower lakes and businesses that cater to those enjoying the river await you. There are numerous swimming areas and "Redneck Yacht Clubs," where you will find groups of boats anchored up or parked on a sandbar. Join in, make some new friends, and enjoy the wonderful Wolf. <sup>WO</sup>

*For more information about the Wolf River system from Joel "Doc" Kunz, visit his website at [DocsWaters.com](http://DocsWaters.com) or his video magazine at [LifeOnTheWolf.com](http://LifeOnTheWolf.com). You can find both of those pages and his personal page on Facebook.*

I'm doing my "clean out the freezer" column a little bit early this year. I had the unfortunate mishap of leaving my freezer door ajar, and, not noticing it for a couple of days, I was forced to have a marathon cooking adventure with the thawed items. Whew! What a job! Happily, I was able to salvage almost everything. On that note, here are some good ideas for whatever you may have in your freezer. <sup>WO</sup>

### Cranberry Venison

- 2-3 pounds venison chops
- ¼ cup flour
- ½ tsp. salt
- ½ tsp. pepper
- ½ tsp. onion powder
- ½ tsp. garlic powder
- 2 T. olive oil
- 1 cup cranberry juice



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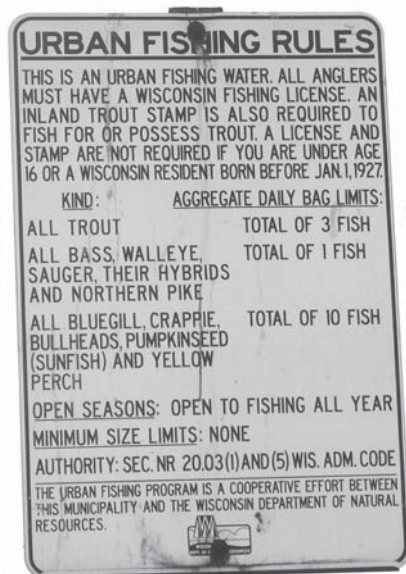
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DAVE DUWE

# Small Water, Big Fun

## Pond-ering the alternatives



Fishing is a sport that young and old can participate in equally. As a very young boy I was fishing almost all summer long. My parents were concerned with the local rivers' dangerous currents, so most of my fishing was done in ponds. Growing up in Southern Wisconsin, ponds are everywhere. Most of the waters around my house allowed public fishing, though some landscaping ponds by factories and businesses were private due to insurance requirements.

With a young son of my own, I find myself fishing ponds again. Due to my busy schedule, I usually only have a couple of hours to fish with him per week. Pond fishing gives us the opportunity to go fishing without spending a lot of time launching the boat or dealing with the crowds.

Fishing ponds can include retention ponds for a subdivision, ponds in a state or county park, or a farm pond. In Wisconsin, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has even deemed some public waters urban fisheries. Urban fishing waters were designated to make fishing opportunities more readily available and encourage more people to fish. To locate the urban fisheries in your area, you can check out the Wisconsin DNR website. Urban fisheries have special regulations, so make sure you know them and follow them.

What constitutes a good fishing pond? One with good fishing of course!

I find the best waters to fish have movement—a pond with an inlet and an outlet. The recirculating of the water seems to make fishing better. Weed growth and depth tend to keep the fish happy and growing. Size doesn't seem to matter when it comes to ponds. I have caught 5-pound largemouth bass in waters as small as 1/8 of an acre.

The best ponds to fish have enough water depth so the water doesn't freeze out in winter; this is when the oxygen depletes and the fish die out. A good fishing pond will have a good balance of predator to panfish. This ratio is important to keep the panfish larger in size. With too many fish, a body of water can become stunted. "Stunted" is the term used when fish are predominately very small and overpopulated in a given body of water.

Ponds can be as productive as any lake in the state. My son and I have caught everything from rainbow trout to channel catfish. I like to keep the presentation simple. Start with worms or nightcrawlers fished on a bobber or on bottom. Live bait always seems to work. It doesn't need to get expensive either. I like Berkeley Lightning rods with Mitchell spinning reels. I spool the reels with 4- to 6-pound test Silver Thread. The lighter the rod action, the bigger the fight of the fish. My son has just discovered that a 6-inch bluegill on an ultra light feels like a monster fish.

Shore fishing on the edge of the pond also gives a child the opportunity to practice his or her angling skills without hooking someone else. If live bait isn't your thing, good artificial baits to try are lures with vibrations, such as Rat-L- Traps, Mepps #3 inline spinner or white Booyah 1/2-ounce spinnerbaits.

I usually start in the deepest water available with structure and go from there. Fish tend to hold on any piece of structure to which they have access. Weed growth is the most common, but logs, lily pads, or even subtle shoreline changes can hold fish.

Make sure the pond you are fishing is open to the public. Trespassing isn't a good thing at any time.

I make most of my living fishing, and when I am in my boat, I am

constantly working to find and catch fish for my customers. Pond fishing allows me to spend time with my son and to relax, making fishing memories he'll carry with him for the rest of his life. It isn't always about the size of the fish but the time you spend with someone doing what you both love to do. And even if the fish are small, I'm sure he will remember big! *WO*

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



*Author's son Nate with a nice pond largemouth.*

### FOSS, from page 13

shock of your life. We set our stands in a rain storm and woke to three inches of snow. We had not packed any warm gear. The sun melted all the snow by early afternoon, and we prepared to climb the stand where we knew Honey Bear was visiting. I switched the card in the Cuddeback and discovered as we waited for action that the blond bear had been on the bait only hours before. Now it was only a matter of time and she would be back.

Toss out scent control. After the ATV ride in and the walk to the stand, it was like we never showered. Although a skeptic for years, we both used Ozonics—a small battery-operated machine mounted above the hunter's head that pulls in oxygen and sends out odor-killing ozone. It works; I had bears downwind of me that could not smell me. Now I will not hunt without one.

When the boars came in from behind, my finger was tapping a warning on Bill's head like a woodpecker. I could physically feel the adrenaline moving his body as his lips quivered and the tree shook. The first bear eyeballed the movement but quickly chose the bait. The second boar decided to investigate and came several feet up our trunk, hissing his displeasure. Exciting stuff.

Finally, Honey Bear arrived but it would be a tense 3-1/2 hours before the boars allowed her access to the bait. Once again, the tree was shaking, the

camera was on and focused, and Bill was on center stage. Honey Bear, due to the nearby boars, not us, came in with extreme caution. Despite the fever, Bill's arrow was true and Honey Bear traveled only 20 yards, ending one of the greatest hunts I had ever been a part of. The bear of a lifetime was on the books.

For any Wisconsin hunter who loves the bear hunt but not the wait for a kill tag, try a Canadian adventure. Bill and I were so impressed with Bear Claw Outfitters that our 2013 hunt with three more friends is already booked.

The hunt placed me on the other side of the coin. Now I know what my clients go through when mentally preparing for the day. Have I chosen the right guide? Purchased the right equipment? Do I know my limitations with bow or firearm? And so much more.

I understand. And I think I will be a better guide. *WO*

*For more information contact Roger Eagles, Bear Claw Outfitters: [www.bearclawoutfitters.com](http://www.bearclawoutfitters.com) or 306.634.6681.*

*Mike Foss was born and raised in Washburn, Wisconsin. As a guide and owner of Northern Wisconsin Outfitters, he has harvested bear and many deer, including several record book bucks. Northern Wisconsin Outfitters is now booking for the upcoming season. Contact Mike at [www.northernwisconsinoutfitters.com](http://www.northernwisconsinoutfitters.com) or call 715.373.0344.*

**Send us your stories, photos and questions for Mike Foss at [ellis@onwisconsinoutdoors.com](mailto:ellis@onwisconsinoutdoors.com).**

OWO STAFF

# Product 6-Pack

## Great gear for the woods, fields and waterways

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--J.J.R.

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


### CHAMPION WHEELYBIRD TRAP

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--J.J.R.

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

### RAPALA RIPPIN' RAP

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--J.J.R.

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


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--D.E.

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


### AIMPOINT MICRO H-1

At \$625, this compact, one-time (non-magnifying) red-dot sight is ideal for rifles, shotguns, handguns or archery equipment. Its features an integral Weaver-style mount allowing for easy attachment, full waterproof capability, ability to handle aggressive recoil, and much more.



"The great advantage here is that this red-dot sight is a parallax-free optic. This means you don't need to have your eye precisely lined up straight on to be accurate. That technology is what makes it so pricey, but that is also why it makes a great sight for hunting handguns, ARs (mounted on a M4 handle) and even compound bows."

--D.E.

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

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--J.J.R.

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

Product 6-Pack contributors include Dick Ellis (D.E.) and JJ Reich (J.J.R.). If you have recommendations for good gear that works for you, tell us about it: email: [ellis@onwisconsinoutdoors.com](mailto:ellis@onwisconsinoutdoors.com).

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### 3112 PROLINER SERIES

- Sleek design of one piece construction
- Stretchable, Light-weight and durable
- 200 grams 3M™ Thinsulate™ Insulation in Boot
- Cleated rubber or felt out sole

3M  
**Thinsulate**  
INSULATION  
200 gram insulation

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

**100% Waterproof**  
Stretch Nylon Jersey  
Stretch Rubber  
Stretch Nylon Jersey

**100% Waterproof Rubber Bottom**  
Ozone Resistant Special Rubber  
Polyurethane Foam  
Thinsulate™  
Stretch Nylon Jersey  
Stretch Rubber  
Stretch Nylon Jersey

3M™ and Thinsulate™ are trademarks of 3M.

**100% Waterproof**

- Outside rubber pull strap for tighter fit
- Adjustable nylon wader strap

PRO LINE

**100% Waterproof**

**100% Waterproof**

**100% Waterproof**

### 71101 Twin River

- Extremely lightweight rubber construction with 300D nylon lamination but with durability and strength to protect
- Cleated outsole for sure traction
- Removable insole for all day wearing comfort
- Adjustable side strap for perfect fit

### NW9301 Marsh Creek

- Neoprene Chest Waders
- 3.5MM neoprene lightweight, insulated, snug fit
- Each wader is air and water tested to assure waterproof
- All seams are butt cemented, stitched and sealed
- Quick release buckles
- Large outside pocket
- 200 grams of 3M™ Thinsulate™ Insulation
- Double knee patches Rubber Boot Foot
- All vulcanized rubber construction
- The rubber outsole style features a deep cleated design for traction

### 22103KHK Stream

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

## Pro Line Manufacturing Co.

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