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PHOTO BY DICK ELLIS

FIRST WISCONSIN MADE HENRY RIFLES ARE SHIPPING



The Henry H009 .30/30



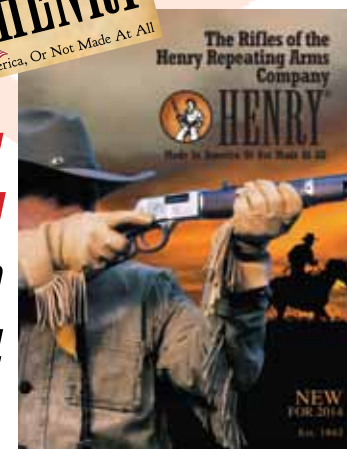
The Henry H010 .45/70

We are pleased to report that the first Wisconsin built Henry rifles have started shipping. The Henry Model H009 Lever Action .30/30 and the H010 .45/70 are now shipping from our plant in Rice Lake, Wisconsin. The roll mark on the barrel reads “Henry Repeating Arms - Rice Lake Wisconsin - Made in USA”. The serial numbers start with “W” for Wisconsin. Please order our free catalog which comes with a list of Henry dealers in your area so you can obtain one of the first Wisconsin-made Henrys. Destined to be a collector’s item - so don’t miss out!



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LEE GATZKE

NextBuk Outdoors

Rules for self-filming a hunt

When I was 12 years old, I made a promise to myself to keep hunting all my life as long as I was physically able to do so. That promise, made decades ago, still comes to mind each fall as I usher in another hunting season and has been kept ... so far. I've had a lot of memorable hunts since I made that promise, and I wish I had filmed some of the earlier ones. For the last decade I have captured a lot of my hunts on video, and it's fun to go back and watch them as they actually happened. I've learned a thing or two about how to self-film my hunts and thought I would share with those who are just getting into filming their own hunts.

My first attempt at self-filming a hunt was an early season bowhunt for deer. My treestand was placed at the edge of some woods overlooking a cattail marsh. The deer bedded in the marsh and came past my stand on their way to get an evening meal. I had my video camera mounted to a camera arm, which was strapped to my tree and allowed for hands-free recording when the need arose. The camera arm would rotate horizontally and held the cam-



Tools of the trade: camera arms which mount to a tree or a tripod are a must for self-filming your hunts.



era, so I only needed to follow the deer by pushing the arm in the direction the deer traveled, keeping the deer centered in the camera screen.

As the shadows grew longer that evening I could hear deer approaching from the cattails, so I turned on the camera and pointed it in their direction. Once the doe and fawn were visible I zoomed in on them, but they would periodically be swallowed up in the brush and I'd lose track of them. I got flustered and zoomed in and out to relocate them. This went on many times until I realized it was time to pick up my bow and shoot or I'd lose my chance at them. I zoomed out one last time hoping the doe would remain in the camera field of view as I let go of the camera and picked up my bow. She didn't. No shot was taken because she also got through my only shooting lane before I could take proper aim. Welcome to the pitfalls of self-filming!

Reviewing the footage later that evening was an eye-opener. I zoomed in and out so often and moved the camera in a jerky fashion so much that it was impossible for a sober man to watch. The only steady footage I got was when I zoomed out then let go of the camera just before picking up the bow to shoot. But I zoomed out too far, making the doe look like she was a mile away as she walked off the screen. Common mis-

Beginning September 5, watch Lee Gatzke take this buck during a self-filmed Wisconsin hunt at www.onwisconsinoutdoors.com



allows you time to pick up your weapon and shoot before the subject walks out of the scene.

Doing pre-hunt and post-hunt on-camera interviews of the hunter gives interesting information about the hunt that a camera does not capture. Things to be mentioned are location, weather conditions, time, etc.

I recommend filming your children's hunts, as they have a real appreciation for the finished product and will enjoy viewing the footage decades into the future. *W*

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

takes that practice and following a few rules would later cure.

Rule One: Use a tree arm or tripod to mount your camera to. This allows for smooth panning of the camera while you keep the subject centered in the viewfinder or screen. It also allows for hands-free camera operation while taking a shot with your weapon.

Rule Two: Go slow. Move the camera only fast enough to keep up with the subject. Zoom in and out slowly and infrequently.

Rule Three: Landmarks. Sometimes the subject becomes obscured by brush or topography. When this happens, keep filming the landmarks where you last saw the subject or pan the camera forward to where you think it will reappear.

Rule Four: Determine a kill zone. When an approaching subject enters into shooting range, you turn from videographer into hunter. As the subject is entering the kill zone swing the camera forward of the subject and zoom out so you have a larger field of view, which al-

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TOM CARPENTER

The Case For Crossbows

Why the new season is good for Wisconsin

This fall, for the first time, crossbows will be legal in Wisconsin during regular archery seasons. That breaks with tradition and could cause some controversy. But I seem to remember a parallel controversy back in the early 1970s when I started bow hunting and something called “compound bows” came out.

The Arguments Against Crossbows

Crossbow opponents aren't necessarily against the gear itself. Rather, they are against the crossbow's use during archery-only seasons. It's a fine line. Here are the arguments against crossbows for regular archery seasons:

Crossbows' range is too great. They make it easy to kill a deer. There's a misperception that crossbows are long-range tools and you can kill deer at 60, 70 or 80 yards consistently. That's simply not true. For most hunters, the crossbow adds maybe 10 good yards onto the range of what can be done with a compound bow.

In most hands, the crossbow is a 50-yard hunting tool. Compound bows are deadly out to 30 yards for some shooters and maybe 40 yards in the hands of a really good shooter. Are an extra 10 to 20 crossbow yards really going to whack back our deer herd?

Crossbows will increase archery kills and decimate deer herds. It's like hunting with a firearm. In no way is a crossbow a consistent 70- to 100-yard weapon similar to a slug gun, as opponents might want you to believe. Crossbow bolt speeds are not that different from arrow speeds out of today's top compound bows, and arrow/bolt drop is similar between compounds and crossbows.

Just as compound bows did not decimate deer herds, neither will crossbows. The tools just are not that different. Archery deer harvests have not skyrocketed in states where crossbows are legal in archery season.

Crossbows don't take as much practice or skill to shoot as compounds or traditional bows. More people can shoot them well. Yes! And the point is ...?

If the crossbow has a distinct advantage, it's that it is more accurate in more people's hands. This means cleaner kills and fewer wounded deer. How can



Are you ready for crossbow hunting? It's legal during archery season in Wisconsin this fall! This hunter is carrying a compact TenPoint Stealth SS.

someone be opposed to those goals?

And this is exactly the reason crossbows are great for the sport of bow hunting. Women, children, older folks, people with major physical disabilities, or even minor ones that make traditional or compound bows difficult to impossible to use, are all perfect candidates for crossbow hunting. This translates into more hunters in the sport, which is just what the hunting world needs right now.

The Case for Crossbows

Refuting the arguments against crossbows doesn't complete the case for them. Here are the reasons why crossbows are great:

Crossbows allow broader participation in archery hunts. More people can handle a crossbow than a traditional or compound bow. Crossbows expand who can bow hunt. This is critical at a time when we're trying to expand hunting participation.

Crossbows are perfect for getting kids and teens involved in bow hunting. You're not going to change how busy we keep children's lives these days, so why not set up kids with a crossbow, which requires less practice time and builds hunting opportunity?

Every statistic and study on bow hunting participation recognizes a steep drop in bow hunter participation as we age. It starts in our late 40s. Now that crossbows are legal, you can keep hunting the archery season well into your senior years.

Crossbows produce precise bolt placement. This results in quick, clean and

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JOHN LINDEMAN

The Hunt for Ancient Artifacts

Dad's lessons unlock Wisconsin history

My father has been talking to me about hunting for Native American artifacts for the better part of three decades. Of course, I've been too busy to take the bait. I mistakenly thought there was all the time in the world to try that stuff.

Recently, all the time in the world came knocking.

Preparation for this type of excursion is much like fishing or deer hunting. You set the alarm to sound off just after you decide to hit the sack. Upon waking, good-natured arguments over who will be driving, making coffee, buying breakfast, giving directions continue until you arrive at the chosen destination.

On this, the day of my first Native American artifact hunting trip, I found myself under the protective wings of my father, Richard Lindeman, and his buddy, Louie Scott, both of Beloit, Wisconsin. The duo has logged thousands of hours hunting artifacts from the southern stretches of Illinois to the northern regions of Wisconsin.

Our hunting during my first experience was focused on recently tilled fields in the Hixton, Wisconsin area. Yes, I said "area." Artifact hunters are even more secretive about productive locations than fisherman. I was about to learn why by spending the next 10 hours focused only on dirt just in front of my feet on "Lake X."

Potential hunting sites are endless and easy to find. The prime spots, however, take years to locate ... unless you are lucky enough to know people like my dad and Louie. They stressed that artifact hunters should never set foot in a field without permission from the owner. Once permission is granted, build a relationship with the landowner that starts by treating the property with respect.

"Never walk on planted seeds or seedlings. Instead, walk between the rows," Lindeman said. "Use some common sense."

As I found out, it's best to tag along with an experienced artifact hunter—or

two—to show you the ropes. Little suggestions go a long way in making that first experience an enjoyable one. Like finding good hunting grounds with access.

"Louie began taking me to his favorite spots only after he realized I was serious about the whole thing," said Lindeman. "And, after he could trust me to keep his best hunting locations a secret."

Why not keep things secret? These two guys spent hours trekking in fields one crop row, one field, one step at a time. It's a methodical, time consuming process that can be very rewarding, they said. Both agree that real success takes persistence.

"When you find and hold an artifact crafted by hand hundreds or thousands of years ago, it's just incredible," Lindeman said. "We are finding tools used that cultures depended on for survival."

Around six hours into my hunt, it happened for me. Just to the left my weary eyes caught the sharp edge of a flat stone situated mostly beneath the

surface. I flipped it over and there was the first artifact of my short career: an arrowhead blank.

Initially, I was slightly disappointed in my find, but Scott quickly explained the significance.

"This stone was carefully shaped into the blank for a number of reasons," Scott said. "Its owner could use it to trade or later finish into a projectile point when needed."

Like any good coach or mentor does, Scott turned my keeper into a trophy. I stuffed that piece of Native American history deep into my pocket and used the adrenaline rush to fuel another few hours of hunting.

The duo explained that recently tilled fields improve your chances of success by potentially bringing artifacts to the surface. A rain shower, in the same regard, will break up clumps of dirt to reveal treasures within.

The three of us spent the entire day

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**THE RULES
HAVE CHANGED
BUT THE
Tradition
Remains!**

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ARE YOU READY?**


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DICK ELLIS

On Wisconsin Outdoors

Rutting bucks bring ecstasy, agony

With one big buck already down and the sun still hanging high in the late autumn sky of east-central Wisconsin, it would almost be selfish to ask more from the day.

2013 Wisconsin rut activity was nearing peak, and I was on prime private property in Winnebago County just completing the bow hunter's ritual high in a white oak. Minutes before, the portable stand had been slipped from my back and fastened to the base of the tree. I had quietly risen to a comfortable elevation too high to be busted but comfortably low enough to arrow that special buck walking across my mind.

This woodlot of hickory and oak grew from a large, sloping stand of white spruce, which bordered a long and narrow crop of turnips that fell off into the vast cattail marsh bordering Rush Lake. I reached high above on the oak to loop the black nylon strap around the trunk and click it home, ensuring that the safety vest would forgive any fall. Periodically, I looked up and around to avoid getting caught as I worked by some wily doe or love-sick buck on the move.

Hand over hand, I brought up the rope that carried the bow, a small pack with the archer's necessities and the Canon. The camera had already done its job for this outdoor writer who would rather capture the cover shot for the paper than fasten a tag to a good buck. Those memories of a rare morning fell over me again as I worked.

Craig Cutts had dropped a perfect 10-point buck with a flawless double lung shot a few hundred yards to the south of this stand soon after first light. Cutts had permission to hunt this land from a mutual friend long before me, and that common bond had led to our own friendship.

He is an experienced and successful archer, with a confident, blue collar approach in his annual quest to tag a special buck. Like most of us, he looks at the rut as something special. He knows that big bucks often make big mistakes only when nature's drive to pass on the royal genes overrules nature's demand to just survive. To swing the odds, Cutts concentrates on scent control mainly by playing the wind, good camouflage and diligent practice.

During the rut, he will hold long vigils in the mid-day hours; a move that he says often leads to the most exciting hunts and high activity of the mating season. Being at the right place at the right time, he knows, is crucial to success, and, despite his own focus on preparation, sometimes he'll take pure luck over any calculated plan

of setting the ambush.

In the black, Cutts had chosen to skirt the woods and the early morning frost that would betray his journey in. Instead of his boots cracking on the frozen forest floor, the more forgiving turnips allowed him to quietly walk the crop edge to the strip of ancient maples towering over the cattail marsh on the far side of the field.

"It was a cold morning, a classic Wisconsin bow hunting morning," he said. "It was just so loud. As soon as I climbed into the stand I could hear deer in the cattails. I looked across the field to the woodlot and watched a doe cross the field with a big buck slowly following. They came right to me. It was pure luck. Sometimes being lucky is better than anything else. The shot was 18 yards. I'm not going to miss that shot."

The Cutts kill put my own planned afternoon hunt on the fast track. I was in the truck 30 minutes after his call and an hour later on my belly in the turnips shooting the buck hopefully for a future cover of *On Wisconsin Outdoors* with Cutts in the maple in the background. After helping Craig load his buck in the truck, he left for registration and I retreated to the woodlot. The white oak would be a new stand, and I quickly worked to hunt.


Almost in the game, I drew the bow and snapped off the branches that would intrude on my shooting lanes. I hung the bow with nocked arrow near the camera. When the buck came, my inner demons named "reporter" and "hunter" would whisper their arguments again regarding which tool I should reach for.

From fastening the stand at the base of the trunk until I was ready to hunt had been maybe ten minutes. I turned a 180 on the stand to settle in for the long vigil and locked eyes with a beautiful eight-point buck wound tight for escape at ten yards that would rival the Cutts buck in size. No, I never heard him. I never saw him. Reporter and hunter, though, quickly offered their consensus.

"You are an idiot ..."

I froze through the stand-off, like the buck, but we both already knew the ending. He didn't forget me like some aberration, as I had hoped. He did find the white spruce in three bounds.

I was wrong. The day did get better. Craig Cutts was right. Luck is a good thing to wear in the woods.

I should have found the white pine five minutes earlier. 




Craig Cutts approaches the 10-point buck he arrowed at 18 yards from the ancient maple in the back ground.

LINDEMAN, from page 6

near Hixton gazing toward the ground in anticipation. It was awesome. Every time I passed either my dad or Louie they checked on my progress and I on theirs. They were teaching and I was learning.

I appreciate the fact that my dad and his buddy shared with me a very important part of their lives: Native American artifact hunting. They have their favorite discoveries ranging from axe heads to tiny bird points and ceremonial jewelry to gaming pieces.

As for me, I love my arrowhead blank and I'm not going to trade it. 

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

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TOM CARPENTER

Cubs Corner

Teal time

With September come the youth waterfowl weekend and the early general duck openers in Wisconsin, which can only mean one thing: teal! While traditionally thought of more as a southern bird, we northern hunters have plenty of chances at blue-wings and green-wings before the snow flies. But the opportunities are especially good in the early season.

Teal are simple and fun to hunt and perfect for your young hunter. A big rigger with a boatful of blocks to a free-lance pothole specialist with a pair of hip boots and a sackful of old mallard decoys can work wonders on northern teal. I tend toward the latter approach during teal time. It fits the kinds of small waters that teal call home now, although sometimes I'll paddle or pole a canoe in.

I love my pothole bag filled with a couple dozen life-sized blue-winged and green-winged teal decoys. The species specialization can't hurt. You may not need the colored drakes, but the color can help attract ducks. You can get by just as well with mallard decoys. Teal feel safe around mallards, and the little ducks will not hesitate to glide right in. Plus, the larger mallard decoys add visibility to your spread. Go with all hen decoys if you want, but drakes won't hurt anything.

Decoy placement is more important than the decoy species you use. Have your young hunter help put out the blocks. Two kinds of sets work best:

- Put the wind at your back, then set out two knots of 7 to 11 decoys each on either side of you, leaving a 20-yard gap in front to serve as an attractive landing zone target for incoming flocks.
- Work a cross-breeze. Put a knot of 13 to 15 decoys out upwind of your hide, leaving a landing zone in front of you. It helps to push the pod of decoys up against the pond's upwind cattail bank or shore, so incoming birds are forced to land in front of you instead of beyond.

Calling works well on our northern teal, and any audible duck sound can grab a flock's attention and get them to swing around for a look. The higher-pitched quacks and chuckles of a good blue-winged teal call can really make birds feel confident. Try Haydel's BB-10 or BT-85 Teal Calls, Flextone's Blue-Winged Teal Call, Buck Gardner's Teal Duck Call, the Duck Commander Teal Call, or Faulks' BW-04 Blue-Winged Teal Call.

All those calls will replicate the mini quacks of blue-wings and green-wings. For green-wing whistles, try Faulks' GW-41 Whistle, Flextone's 6-N-1 Whis-

The author's son, Noah, with a limit of blue-winged teal. Teal offer everything a waterfowler could want: fast action, challenging shooting and great eating.

tle, or the Primos Duck Whistle. Your favorite mallard call will work just fine on teal if investing in a few teal calls isn't in the hunting budget this year.

Early season Wisconsin teal hunts usually don't require a blind. With vegetation not yet backed down by freezing weather, there's generally enough natural cover (cattails, reeds or weeds) to just step into and hide. Wear appropriately-colored camouflage and add a face mask to hide your skin and help keep mosquitoes at bay. Pack along some light blind fabric just in case some hideout enhancements are needed.


Light waders or hip boots are good for most early blue-winged teal hunts. Even in late September and early October conditions are usually quite mild. By the time tough little green-wing drakes arrive, though, you'll be wearing your Neoprenes and other traditional cold-weather duck garb.

Early season northern teal hunts can quickly evolve into something more. Wood ducks, local mallards, early-arriving ringbills, and sometimes gadwalls, pintails or wigeon can make pleasant surprise visits, so it's important to use a load that's effective on a variety of ducks.

If I were assured of just teal shooting, size 5 or 6 steel shot would get the nod. Considering all the other possibilities,



size 4 steel in fast shells (Federal's new Black Cloud Close Range loads are ideal) run a good compromise. Go with an improved cylinder choke and have that young hunter swing right on through, thinking *butt-bird-beak-BANG*. Teal are small, so they don't fly as fast as they appear to, but a little lead and swing-through is still essential.

The rewards of teal time? Once-in-a-lifetime smiles from thrilled young hunters. Elegant little ducks on the strap—a bag colored up with powder-blue epaulets and metallic green speculums and some of the finest eating you can imagine out of the pan. Get out there after some teal this fall! 

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

DIANE SCHAUER

Waterfowl Hunters And AIS: We Need Your Help!

Halting the spread of invasive species

“You know, I've heard about cleaning my boat when I'm done fishing, but I never even thought about cleaning the weeds and mud from my gear when I'm duck hunting.”

This is a sentiment I've heard quite a few times from waterfowl hunters. I had been trying to educate them about preventing the spread of invasive species between water bodies for more than five years, but clearly it wasn't enough. So a couple of Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Coordinators and educators put our heads together to figure out what we needed to do.

We had never met waterfowl hunters who didn't genuinely care about protect-

ing the areas where they hunt. We know that, just like the fellow quoted above, many waterfowl hunters also fish. At the boat launches they see AIS signage and Clean Boat/Clean Waters watercraft inspectors. We hand them “Stop Aquatic Hitchhiker” towels for the 4th of July Landing Blitz and frozen ice packs reminding them to drain all water from their boats, motors and live wells.

It's a very similar message for the waterfowl hunter. The same state laws which require boaters and anglers to remove all vegetation and animals from equipment and to drain all water apply to everyone, no matter how they recreate on lakes, rivers and marshes. Those

of you who hunt Lake Michigan or on places like Lake Winnebago likely drain the water from your boats as you do after fishing. Yet other hunters don't even think about how they are moving invasive species into and around the state.

Some things are different for waterfowl hunters. To clarify a few of those things, let's talk mud. Do you ever think about what's in it? Brown mucky stuff, to be sure. But mud can also contain seeds from invasive plants like reed canary grass or root fragments that can spread *Phragmites australis*. Those of us in the eastern part of Wisconsin know how terrible *Phragmites* can be. Let's not help it

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MIKE FOSS

A Legend In The Shadows

Huge bear focuses guide's work

Out of hibernation for only a short time, the bear was already huge. Many people over-estimate a bear's size, a fact that can lead to disappointment for inexperienced Wisconsin hunters who only draw a tag once every eight years and then approach their fallen bear only to find the animal is much smaller than they estimated before the shot.

But guiding for bear is my life, and long ago I learned to trust my evaluation of tracks, photographs and field encounters. I know when I see a special bear. There is no mistaking the size of this monster in Bayfield County. He was all of 500 pounds in early summer and probably closer to 600 pounds. He will be close to 700 pounds or more by the time the Wisconsin bear season starts in early September. That is an animal that will raise the hair on the neck of a hunter waiting alone on a stand in the last light of a September evening.

I captured this bear on camera two years ago at the famous Snaggle Tooth bait station as we targeted Wood Tick, another mammoth bear that was tagged by one of our hunters in 2012 weighing in at 527 pounds. Wood Tick, so nick-named due to his enormous belly, was chased off the bait station by this new monster. A 500-pound bear does not run from a rival unless that intruding bear is something special. Well, this boy is. I nicknamed him Sausage. He isn't like any other enormous "doughboy" bears we have shot in the past. He is instead extremely long, solid and seemingly has no neck.

Even after capturing Sausage on trail cam in June, I knew it would be difficult to keep him coming back. Our snapshot of him came, like most of the biggest bears, during the black bear breeding season. Who knows where this bear had come from? He might have wandered in from 20 miles away pursuing female companionship. As hard as I tried to keep him returning to the bait, Mother Nature was offering something better than food and he did indeed disappear. Like other big bears, I hoped he'd remember the bait later, during the season when my hunters won't be competing with sows in heat. Until one early autumn day I thought that we had seen the last of him.

The baiting ritual of summer continued until one day we caught a break in the search for the biggest bear. Baiting with my lead guide, Robert, a farmer noticed our ATVs and equipment and let us know that a bear "as big as a Volkswagen" was frequenting adjacent property. Neither Robert nor I betrayed our excitement in our quiet discussion, but our emotions spilled over back in the truck with the possibility. Could this be our bear? We devised a plan to help us find out.



Guide Mike Foss estimates this bear carried an early summer weight between 500 and 600 pounds, with a projection of 700 pounds by the September season.

Google Earth on my computer pinpointed the property where the bear had been seen. Could he be so close? The scouting tool verified that our bait station that had given us the monster bear picture was just one mile away. I was now more confident that we were closing in on his summer haunt, and we placed more bait to confirm it. With the breeding season over, I received a call from Robert.

"I just saw a huge bear on that property," Robert said. "The biggest bear I have ever seen in my life crossed the road only 50 yards from me."

Could this be another legendary bear like Snaggle Tooth or a brute like Wood Tick, or the 638-pound giant taken by one of our hunters in 2009? Will one lucky hunter end this drama in 2014, or will it go on for years like the quest for Snaggle Tooth did? This time, I tell myself, I will not get so emotionally tied to an animal with an instinct ... a gift ... to survive.

I answered the phone yesterday. Robert checking in with his baiting report.

"I saw Bus-15 today in the field," he said.

"What is a Bus-15?" I answered.

"He's that monster bear we're after," said Robert. "He's as big as a bus and it will take 15 guys to drag him out."

Bus-15 it is. Let the hunt begin.



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. Off season, Mike is constantly scouting for new hunting areas and adventures. Go to northernwisconsinoutfitters.com or call them at 715.373.0344.

JIM SERVI

Inside The Wolf Hunt:

Debate rages, advice for the hunter

Even if you've tried to ignore the conversation, you probably haven't been able to, since it's been the talk of the outdoor community in Wisconsin for the last decade. With that alone you probably guessed the topic: wolves. I've always dreamed of being an outdoor writer, and that dream came true when I was asked to cover the wolf committee meetings for Wisconsin Outdoor News. Little did I know exactly what I was getting into, but I wouldn't have it any other way. On top of that, I drew a wolf tag last year, and although I was unsuccessful, I learned some things along the way. Now I'm passing some of that information on to you.

The wolf debate escalated when Wisconsin announced its inaugural wolf season in 2012 after years of lawsuits and millions of dollars spent delisting and relisting the gray wolf from the endangered species list were finally over. Much of the wolf debate centers on the number 350. That is the population goal that is stated in the current wolf management plan, but the estimate of wolves is always given in the form of an over winter minimum count. Last winter the count showed an estimate of 658 - 687, down from 809 - 834 the winter prior. Science shows that number likely doubles during the summer months.

With an overall mortality rate of 362 wolves last year, or 45% of that number, the wolf committee recommended a new quota of 156 wolves for the upcoming season. The Natural Resources Board approved the proposal on June 25th, much to the displeasure of critics on both sides. Diana Miller of the Menominee Indian Tribe and Melissa Tedrowe, Wisconsin Director of the Humane Society of the United States, both wanted, "the unsporting practice of wolf hunting ended immediately." Al Lobner, Wisconsin Bear Hunters Association President, and Eric Koens, Wisconsin Cattlemen's Association board member, wanted to see a higher quota "to get the population in line with the management goal."

With the proposal of 156 wolves, the season would be split between the management zones as follows: Zone 1:33, Zone 2: 16, Zone 3: 41, Zone 4: 9, Zone 5: 21 and Zone 6: 36. The committee also elected to have the same ratio of permits with 10 times the proposed quota, or 1,560 kill permits. Last fall 257 wolves were harvested from the six different zones in Wisconsin. There were over 16,000 applicants with 2,510 of those ultimately receiving a wolf permit. The zones opened on October 15th and most found that the key was to get out in the woods quickly. Zones 1, 2 and 5 closed before the end of October and Zones 4 and 6 followed a week later. According to a survey of those selected to purchase a wolf license, more than 40% never made it out to the woods because the season was closed by the time they were ready to go.

Definite wolf sign was there with 88.3% reporting signs of wolves while out in the field. After speaking with several successful trappers, those that were out early and found fresh sign were the most likely to harvest a wolf. Another way to improve your chances of getting a wolf is to take up trapping. A whopping 180 of the 257 wolves harvested were caught in foothold traps. Successful trappers used the same techniques employed by fox and coyote trappers: dirt hole sets with a larger trap, such as the MB-650, powerful lure and plenty of dirt scattered to catch their eye. Two successful trappers said if you don't see fresh sign after a few days, "you need to move to stay ahead of the wolves." Hound hunting was also very lucrative, accounting for 35 wolves in

continued on page 16

JERRY KIESOW

The Advanced Shotgun Education Class

A guide to knock down and recover more game birds

The objective of the Advanced Shotgun Education class I would participate in at the Maribel Sportsman Club was a worthy one: to help waterfowl and other hunters learn how to reduce the number of wounded and lost ducks, geese and all game birds. Through hands-on experience, class attendees would learn how to develop effective shot and choke combinations for various game birds; how to better estimate correct shooting (kill) ranges; and improve their wing shooting technique by using the “swing through” method.

I learned about the class through the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Daily Digest Bulletin. Upon enrolling for a cost of \$25.00, including lunch, we were told to bring our hunting shotgun and five of our non-toxic shells in a Ziploc bag with our name on it.

The clinic, and most of its equipment and supplies, was sponsored by the WDNR. The class was conducted by four members of the Green Bay Duck Hunters who had attended special training classes so they would be qualified. They were using the Maribel club grounds in Manitowoc County because their club grounds were not big enough to handle the class of 20. Instructors included Bill Feucht, Tom Bahti, Mathew Ernst and George Robinson, a member of both GBDH and president of the Maribel Sportsman Club.

Robinson opened the class with a discussion on safety and a promise that broken rules would mean immediate expulsion. He moved on to the focal point of the class, fewer wounded birds, using a Power Point program supplied by the WDNR to assist.

After some Q&A, we went outside for a “skills assessment” session. One at a time, each participant took shots at a fast moving clay bird traveling left to right at 20 yards. The procedure, emphasizing safety, had us standing with our gun open at a designated spot. One of the instructors would load a furnished steel shot shell into the gun. We would close the gun and stand



Quick kills and recovery of geese and ducks are the top priorities of Wisconsin waterfowlers and the Advanced Shotgun Education Class sponsored by the WDNR designed to achieve just that.

John Volkman Photo

with it in a down but ready hunting position. Another instructor released the bird. We shot six to eight shells, depending on how many birds we hit. I hit three, so I got to miss five.

We moved next to “swing through” instruction. With the swing through system, you see the bird, swing the barrel through the body to a point just ahead of the bill, then keep swinging as the trigger is pulled for a complete and continuous follow through. The instructors impressed on us their belief that the swing through method is a much better way to get the shot pattern where it needs to be to make clean kills.

During this instruction I shot another six shells. We finished this portion of the class, broke for a delicious lunch prepared by Robinson’s wife, Lynn, and returned to the range for distance evaluation curriculum. The instructors randomly set up eight decoys on top of poles. One of the instructors took rangefinder readings, so the exact distance was known. We were told to estimate the distance to each decoy and mark a card, numbered

1 to 8.


I was way off on two decoy estimates, within one or two yards on five, and spot on with one. I was happy with the results but wondered why I was so far off: 12 and 17 yards too long, estimating the distance to two decoys. From this we were taught that by using our gun barrel to cover the bird and by how much of the bird we could see we could determine if the bird was in kill range.

Next we went to the patterning boards. Using our own shells, we each patterned one shot at 30 yards with the choke of our choice and counted the shot holes within a 30-inch circle. Upon returning to the clubhouse we were shown a chart created by Tom Roster, showing “proven nontoxic shot loads for waterfowl and upland game birds.” It lists: typical shooting distances; the best shot sizes, minimum loads, in ounces, minimum pattern count for a clean kill; and the most effective chokes for a variety of game birds and conditions under which we hunt.

What did I learn? I now know that my 20 gauge side-by-side grouse gun, with improved cylinder and modified barrels, also becomes a waterfowl gun by changing shells. I can hunt everything with one gun.

If improving your wingshooting skills and reducing losses from wounded game birds interests you, I highly recommend this course. For more information, connect with dnr.wi.gov. In the “search” area type “wing-shooting.” From there you can find the chart, class details and dates.

In any Wisconsin hunter’s book, a bird in the hand beats a lost bird in the bush.

Editor’s Note: Look for Jerry’s regular Flyfishing In Wisconsin column next issue. 

Jerry enjoys all aspects of the outdoors and shares them in many ways through his photos, words and workshops. Check them all out and what he will be doing at his new website: jerrykiesowoc.com.

SCHAUER, from page 8

move west.

Mud may also carry invasive Asian clams and non-native snails like the New Zealand mudsnail (see my article in *OWO* January/February 2014) or faucet snails and their parasites, which kill waterfowl (*OWO* July/August 2011). Who wants to be the waterfowl hunter who introduces duck-killing faucet snails with parasites into the pothole regions in the Dakotas? This is serious stuff.

If there is mud on your skiff, paddles, blind, push poles, hip boots or waders, or your dog’s paws when you leave the marsh, river or lake, you can be moving invasive species. Clean off the mud before you follow the ducks to another site.

Removing vegetation isn’t just about the plants. It can be illegal, and it’s never wise to move plants, plant fragments or seeds from one water body to another. Zebra

mussels and non-native snails can be attached to the plants. Clear all plants off your gear, including your decoys and decoy lines. Drain the water from your decoys while you’re at it.


Most of you know that your actions matter. For you waterfowl hunters who didn’t realize that all of this is important—and the law—you can start doing your best now. But how do we communicate this to the waterfowl hunters who still haven’t gotten the message?

Our group decided to create a survey to assess waterfowl hunters’ movements, knowledge of AIS, and figure out how best to reach all waterfowl hunters. The survey is available at: tinyurl.com/npkxk8a.

It’s not really productive to click on a link in a hard copy of *OWO*, so I asked the publisher, Dick Ellis, if he would include this link on his website. You can find this

short survey under Ellis Blogs at: onwisconsinoutdoors.com/WisconsinOutdoorNews/Waterfowl-Hunting-Survey. (By the way, you should spend some time browsing the website while you’re there. It has lots of great stuff).

Our friends at Wisconsin Waterfowl Association have agreed to post the link to the survey on their upcoming eNews, and it will also be included in the upcoming e-newsletter produced by Wisconsin Ducks Unlimited.

Lots of partners are joining together to do their part to help us get this information to waterfowl hunters to remind them how to help protect the habitat and our hunting traditions. You can be a part of this effort by filling out our Waterfowl Hunter Survey. We all thank you for your help. 

Diane Schauer is the aquatic invasive species coordinator for Calumet County.



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STEVE ELLIS

To Stay in the Field

Orthopedic experts key pain-free return

Everywhere I go, when I talk with people my own age, the conversation frequently turns to how bad our knees hurt ... or how bad our shoulders hurt. If that sounds like you, I'm writing this as encouragement to think about seeing a doctor. Constant pain does not have to be your constant companion, even as a Baby Boomer, or older.

Pain limits what you can do. You want to get out and hunt, or you want to climb into your boat to fish, but it's just not that much fun anymore because of the pain.

In November of 2013, just nine months ago as I write this, I was sitting in my treestand, squirming like a little kid because my left knee hurt so much I couldn't sit still. I had to climb the ladder holding the bad knee straight and come down the same way.

Sitting still was out of the question because no position was comfortable for more than a couple of minutes. The walk through the snow to and from the stand was excruciating. And forget about trying to sleep.

I was scheduled to get the knee replaced in December so I could get through the hunting season. I found myself thinking, "I cannot wait until I can get this done." I was miserable, but I had also been here before.

In January of 2011, I had my left knee replaced by Dr. Rick Glad at the Dean Clinic in Madison. He's a skilled orthopedic surgeon named one of Madison Magazine's Top Docs 2014, a biennial guide of the Madison area's best physicians as chosen by their peers in the local medical community. He's also a hunter himself. He knows what a bad knee can do to your quality of life.

Immediately, the pain of the arthritis was gone. I won't lie to you; rehab after a knee replacement is difficult but also tolerable because it allows for quicker healing.

One year after that surgery the right knee was perfect but the left one was deteriorating. By 2013 I was in pain but looking forward to replacement surgery because I already knew the result would be positive.

Because my insurance changed and the Dean Clinic was no longer "in network" I went to a doctor in Wausau who had done shoulder surgery on me earlier and held him in high regard.

That's the most important message of this story: find an experienced, skilled surgeon. Excellent orthopedic surgeons are in surgery two or three times a day, two or three times a week. Former patients are your best referral source. Aging outdoorsmen with a new lease on life are easy to find, even in my own family.

My brother Jim had knee replacement surgery three years ago in Minneapolis. Before surgery, Jim needed to sit down after any extended walking to try to find relief from debilitating pain. When he gassed his truck on a trip, he needed to hold onto the roof to navigate back to the tank. Even using a cart, by the end of his golf game his hands would shake in pain trying to putt. Today, none of those things, he said, "are even a thought." And in addition to Vilas County backcountry, Jim hunts the extreme bluff country of eastern Minnesota, pulling



Steve Ellis is back hunting and fishing without pain after knee replacement surgery and strongly recommends seeking out quality orthopedic healthcare as the ticket back to Wisconsin's outdoors.

Lydia Ellis Photo



Before knee replacement surgery three years ago, Jim Ellis experienced debilitating pain that kept him from the field and daily activities. Jim dragged this buck up a severe incline without pain during the 2013 muzzleloader season.

deer up and out severe inclines without pain.

Two weeks ago Jim and I went fishing, and the boat landing was poor. We had to dump his 18-foot Lund in and push it out to where it was deep enough to float with us in it. To do that, we had to climb in from the water. That's a lot of boat to climb into, but we both scrambled right up. We were talking about how we couldn't have done that earlier because of our bad knees.

Brother Dick, publisher of *On Wisconsin Outdoors*, had his hip replaced in December 2013 by Orthopedic Surgeon Nick Webber of Aurora Healthcare. He can't say enough about Aurora or Dr. Webber. He was hunting pheasants five weeks after surgery and today is doing everything in the field he did as a 20 year-old,


pain-free. After a story in OWO, Dr. Webber received numerous inquiries from Wisconsin hunters and anglers experiencing orthopedic problems, and began the individualized process needed to return each to the field without pain. We know you're out there. We can relate.

Yes, it's a little frightening to think about joint replacement. However, if you like your outdoor activities and you'd like to do them without thinking about how much it hurts, consider getting yourself repaired. Everything you do for fun is the most fun when it doesn't hurt.

It's August of 2014 and I am feeling perfect. Next month the hunting seasons start and I am looking forward to all of it for the first time in years. It won't hurt. I'm going to duck hunt in the sloppy mud of North Dakota, walk the grouse woods of northern Wisconsin, and climb my treestand for bow and gun deer season.

And I'm sleeping well for the first time in years.

To learn more about Dean Care's Steady Strides Total Joint Replacement Center, please call (844) 201-STEP (7837) or visit steadystrides.com.

To learn more or to find an Aurora orthopedic specialist near you, visit aurora.org/ortho. To connect with Dr. Nick Webber, call 414.649.7900. 


Steve lives in central Wisconsin and has a cabin in the big woods of Iron County. He particularly enjoys the outdoors when in the company of his grandchildren.

CARPENTER, from page 5

humane kills. Crossbows are more accurate than even a good compound bow, because the shooting process requires much less physical prowess. Crossbow shooting is much more like shooting a firearm. What's wrong with making better shots? Hunters of all ages and physical ability can appreciate this.

Crossbows aren't that much faster or more effective than the best compound bows. Technology hasn't ruined hunting yet. Today's best compound bows are flinging arrows at speeds of up to 350 fps, with 400 fps surely on the way. A modern crossbow can zing a bolt out around the 350 fps figure. Where's the difference?

Crossbows are efficient hunting tools for suburban areas. They can help control burgeoning deer herds. As human populations grow and Wisconsin's suburbia and exurbia expand, more and more of our deer hunting will be done near human habitation. Crossbows are a perfect tool— quiet, with limited but effective range—for hunting deer in these types of areas.

Have I made the case? No matter what your position on them, crossbows are here to stay. Give them a try. Or at the least, don't judge those who choose to use them. 

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

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ROBB MANNING

Everyday Carry

Glock Sport Shooting Foundation & Glock Basic Armorer's Course

Judging by Glock sales numbers, a healthy percentage of you own a Glock handgun. If I were a betting man, I would bet that a lot of you Glock owners also use your Glock as your carry gun. I get it; I'm a convert too. Since buying my first one two years ago, I have steadily converted to Glock for almost all of my carry guns.

If you're going to carry a Glock, or just own one, you need to be as familiar with it as possible, just like any gun. The best way to familiarize yourself with your Glock is to join the Glock Sport Shooting Foundation (GSSF). The GSSF itself isn't going to get you more acquainted with your Glock, but it is the gateway to which you will, such as taking part in matches and the Armorer's Course. Plus, if you are interested in buying a Glock, the GSSF offers one

perk that you'll definitely want to hear about.

Joining the GSSF has its advantages. It costs \$35 for the first year and \$25 each year after that. Aside from the swag (newsletter, annual Glock report magazine, hat or range bag, patches, decal, etc.), you'll get to compete in GSSF matches nationwide. What better way to develop your shooting technique than in a match? I'm new to the GSSF and haven't shot in a match yet, but several of my good buddies have. GSSF matches are a lot of fun and are low stress compared to other major matches. And they offer great prizes: free Glocks and cash.

The most important aspect of the GSSF matches is the competition. Competition forces you into a situation of stress, which is good training should you find yourself in the position of hav-

ing to defend yourself. The stress of confronting an armed attacker will never be replicated, but competition will certainly improve your gun handling.

Another perk to the GSSF is that you can attend the Glock Armorer's Course. Years ago the course was open to everyone. Later it was restricted to police/military armorers and people who worked at gun shops that sold Glocks. Now GSSF members can also attend. The course costs \$195 and lasts eight hours, and by the end of the day you'll be able to disassemble a Glock down to all 34 parts (depending on model and generation; some differ in the number of parts), then reassemble it like a pro. You also learn how to troubleshoot and diagnose problems, which is worth the price of admission.

I thoroughly enjoyed the Armorer's Course. It was great to spend the day talking about and playing with Glocks and hearing department armorer horror stories. I left having learned much, and now I can fix any issue I might have with my Glock pistols.

As informative as the Armorer's Course is, there's one perk to joining the GSSF that I like even better. If you join for two or more years (or if you're on the single year plan once you renew your membership for the first time), you get a coupon that enables you to purchase one Blue Label Glock pistol per year. Glock uses a blue label to denote a law enforcement/military priced gun. The blue label price equates to about \$100 - \$150 off regular price (about 15 - 20 percent). The amount off the price is dependent on the model you choose (G-34




This is what you get for joining GSSF, plus benefits.

and other long slides are more, as are the large framed models such as the G-20) and the store in which you purchase the handgun, which can differ slightly.

The only caveat is that you must purchase the handgun from a store that handles law enforcement sales. In Wisconsin, that's only two or three stores. Since none was close to me, I ended up calling Ray O'Herron's (oherron.com) in Danville, Illinois. I called and made the order, mailed them my coupon, had it shipped to my FFL, and in less than a week I had my G-34 in my hand.

If you plan on buying a Glock pistol, it just makes sense to join the GSSF. It costs \$60 for a two-year membership, and they will send you a coupon that will save you about twice that off the purchase. I paid \$125 for a five-year membership and got that back with my first purchase. Hopefully, by the time I get my coupon next year, the G42 will have a little brother in 9mm!

For more information, go to gssfonline.com. 

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



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SERVI, from page 9

the only zone, Zone 3, which remained open after the nine-day gun deer season when dogs are allowed for wolf hunting.

If I had to sum up what I learned to successfully harvest a wolf next time, it would be this: get out and talk to people who are in the woods all the time, put some time in the forest and find fresh wolf sign. Once you do, use multiple methods—trapping, baiting, calling, sitting and hounds—if you get the opportunity, because the season is going to end quickly and you'll likely only have one chance. 

Jim Servi is an outdoor writer, educator, consultant, and a Local Field Director for the US Sportsmen's Alliance. He is currently serving in the US Army Reserves and is a veteran of Afghanistan and Iraq. This lifestyle gives him maximum time to hunt, fish, and trap everything that is fair game in Wisconsin. Jim lives in the middle of the woods on the family farm outside Wausau with his wife and two boys. Contact Jim at Jimservi10@gmail.com.

S. WILKERSON

Building A Better AR15: Part 1

Midwest Industries' Billet Lower Receiver takes the popular platform to new heights

Somewhere, perhaps orbiting the earth is an AR15 takedown spring that I inadvertently launched into space while assembling my first AR15 lower receiver. After an exhaustive search crawling on the floor and looking in the rafters, flashlight in hand, I can only conclude that the spring is now in a galaxy far, far away. From what I have learned from others who have put them together, the Final Frontier or some black hole may be chock-full of AR15 pins, detents and springs. Where these tiny pieces go once they are accidentally let loose from their intended positions is one of life's great mysteries.

Few things in life are certain, but there is absolutely no doubt that even the most ham-fisted hobbyist, with guidance from a trained professional, can put together an AR15, as yours truly can attest. AR15s are the most readily available firearm platforms from which to build an accurate target or varmint

rifle. I've long wanted a rifle capable of sub-one-inch groups at 100 yards for target shooting and varmint hunting, and the AR15 lends itself to both. As an added bonus, AR15s can be assembled into many different configurations, meaning that barrels, stocks, optics, triggers and more can be easily changed to fit different needs and are readily available at reasonable prices. There is also a certain pride of ownership that accompanies a rifle you put together yourself.

Having an idea of what you're doing before you start on a project is always a good idea, especially if that project is a firearm. Sure, a lot of knowledge can be gained via Internet forums, but for every nugget of truth there can be found an equally proportionate pile of hooey. I wanted the wheat separated from the chaff, so when I learned that Wisconsin's own Midwest Industries was offering an "AR15 Basic Assembly and Troubleshooting Class" in Waukesha taught by

an armed forces armorer, I enrolled.

Clever fellow that I am, since I was taking the class, I thought it would be wise to purchase an AR15 lower receiver kit. That way, my education would still be fresh in my mind when I put the kit together. After doing some research, I discovered that there are almost as many AR lower receiver manufacturers as there are lost AR springs hidden from the naked eye. If you're going to make an investment in something that you intend to keep for a lifetime, you should buy the best you can afford, which is why I ultimately selected a Midwest Industries lower.

Not just any lower receiver, either, but one built by Midwest of billet aluminum. Billet aluminum is stronger, looks better, and, because it has an integrated trigger guard, there's no worrying about breaking the trigger guard ears when installing the trigger guard. Break the ears

The basis of the project: the Midwest Industries billet receiver. A precision piece of work.



and you may as well just throw out the receiver. This was something that was a distinct possibility given my mind's tendency to wander when it should be focused. The integrated trigger guard added to the billet lower receiver's appeal.

Midwest's billet lowers cost a little more, but in my opinion you get a lot more, including an exceptional hard coat anodized finish, low shelf design, flared magwell for speedier magazine changes, and a reinforced buffer tube, among other features. The Midwest billet receiver is simply more rugged and aesthetically pleasing than far more common forged lower receivers.

Upon the recommendation of Midwest Industries retail store manager Peter Bratz and Midwest owner Troy Storch, I purchased a Stag trigger assembly, which included the trigger, ham-

continued on page 26



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550 Cord has become the duct tape of the 21st century. Very few things that can be fixed with duct tape can't be tied down or tied together with 550 Cord. But 550 Cord does much more. The drawback to it is that it doesn't store as conveniently as a roll of duct tape. Try as you might, at some point it's going to become tangled into knots. Until now. The Spool Tool is a one stop shop for everything you need to handle your 550 Cord. It stores it—handling up to 100 feet—and it cuts and finishes it with a replaceable razor blade built in to cut it, a slot built in to hold the lighter to burn it, and fusing notches to give it the finishing touch. There's also a slot for a carabiner to attach to your pack or belt. It's made of high-impact polymer and real metal nuts and bolts for a lifetime of use. It's very handy to just grab and toss into your backpack. Comes in black, blue, coyote or orange, and with or without 50 feet of 550 Cord. \$18.95, \$23.95 with 550 Cord. OWO tested and recommended.

spooltool.us



VARMINTLIGHTS.COM: X-SHIM

From the folks at VarmintLights.com, the X-Shim corrects the play between the AR-15 upper receiver and lower receiver. All military and mil-spec civilian rifles I've handled have this play, and it can affect the accuracy. Each pack of X-Shims comes with four shims of different thickness. Simply take the thinnest gauge and place it between the upper and lower, by the rear lug. If it fixes the play, that's the thickness you need. If not, move up to the next thickest gauge. If the thickest gauge doesn't work, double or triple them up until you get rid

of the play. Use all four if you need to. Once you get the desired fit, remove the gauges, grab the corresponding rear lug shims, and slip them into place. Repeat with the front lug. The wobble should now be gone, and accuracy will go up. Simple, yet brilliant. It also comes in an AR-10 rifle kit. \$9.99. OWO tested and recommended.

x-shim.com



WILLIAMS: HQ

The HQ, from Williams, was made with Great Lakes and West Coast Salmon and trout in mind, but it was designed to catch just about anything, anywhere. It's loved by salmon, lake trout, rainbow trout and brown trout, as well as walleye and northern pike. Made with silver, 24 karat gold and copper bases, with UV reactive paint over a honeycomb base material. It's finished with an extra-large strike-inducing reflective eye. Available in two sizes (3.25 inch, 1/3 ounce and 4.25 inch, 3/5 ounce) and 12 color patterns.

us.williams.ca



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With fall salmon runs, the Yakima Bait Company has released the new Toman Thumper Flex, with a new 6-1/2 blade. It's built to take a beating and keep working. The chain swivel body resists bending and holds up strike after strike and fight after fight. The blade is coated in Yakima's exclusive durable powder coat, then sealed with a UV finish. It's tough as nails and corrosion resistant. Designed for whatever waters salmon are found: the Great Lakes, rivers, oceans. Available in two blade sizes, 6-1/2 and 13, and with 14 different finishes. MSRP \$13.

yakimabait.com



BUCKED SCENT ELIMINATOR

New on the market, Bucked is 100 percent natural and 100 percent safe for use on your skin, as well as on clothes, weapons, equipment and surroundings. Vegetable-based non-active natural biocatalysts disallow the formation of odors by using micronutrients to accelerate the natural degradation process of existing bacteria. Unlike other scent eliminators, it's not limited to targeting specific odor compounds, nor is it just a cover-up scent. I've heard many hunters say they don't believe in scent control products; they just hunt the wind. I also believe in hunting the wind; however, wind can shift, swirl and gust, so for me redundancy is key. Hunt the wind and eliminate scent. With Bucked, many other scent eliminators can be done away with, like deodorants, body washes and laundry detergent. I sprayed some on my hands, which smelled like food, and the odor was gone. Comes in a 24-ounce bottle (\$10.99) and a 4-ounce bottle (\$4.49) for your pocket. Combo kits also available. OWO tested and recommended.

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second trigger speed, so deer won't jump the flash and a fast recovery speed, so it's ready to go for the next image. One thing I like that most cameras don't have is the patented Zone Control, which allows you to adjust it to wide view for fields or narrow view for trails and feeders. The 20 megapixel images are clear and sharp and colors are vibrant. It includes a bracket for mounting to the tree for easy on and off and has a small footprint, so looking at it from the front it is small, though it sticks out pretty far if looking at it from the side. The memory card is accessible from the bottom to protect it when you check it in the rain. \$150. OWO tested and recommended.

cuddeback.com

If you have recommendations for good gear that works for you, tell us about it at ellis@onwisconsinoutdoors.com.



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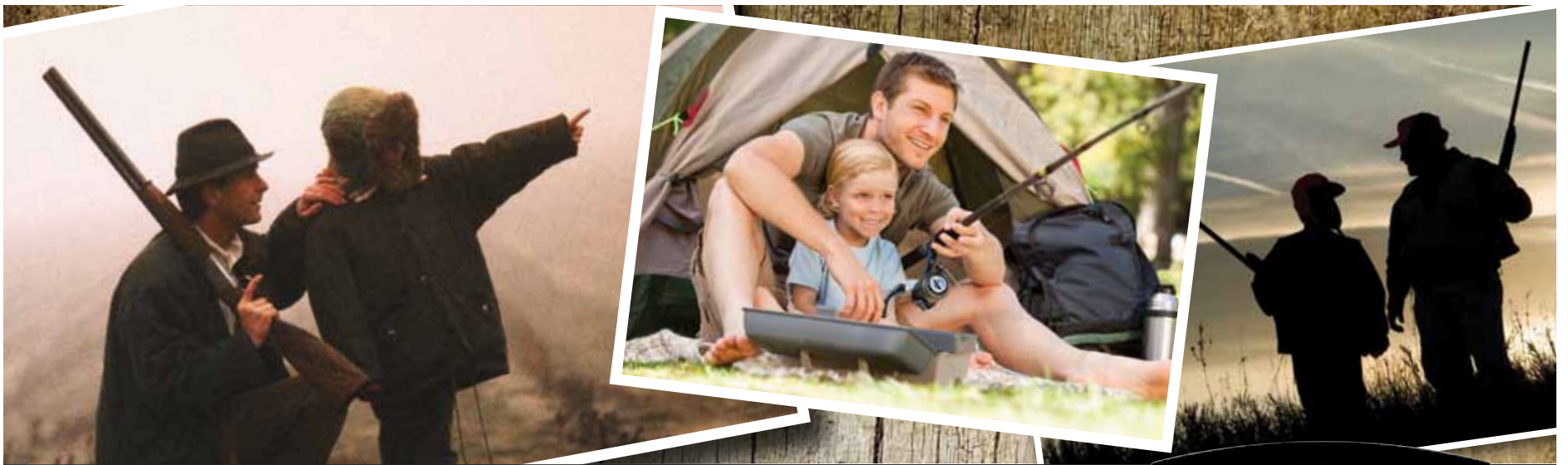
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TOM CARPENTER

Badger Birds

Wood thrush



Although the wood thrush is quite reclusive, residing in Wisconsin's dense forests and woodlands, its mysterious song is among the richest and most melodious in the bird world. Wood thrushes spend spring and summer hunting insects on and in the forest floor. In late summer and autumn, fruit such as dogwood, elderberry, cherry, grapes and mulberries dominate the menu.


Listen for the wood thrush's beautiful song coming from thickets—a lilting and lovely hee-o-lay, hee-o-lay.

Look for a handsome bird, a little smaller than a robin and more slender. Wood thrushes are rich brown above with a rusty-colored head and creamy white on the breast with brown-black spots.

Watch for wood thrushes

hunting on the forest floor. They move much like robins (to which they are closely related), in short bursts.

Leave brush standing on the edge of your yard as habitat for wood thrushes and other cover-loving songbirds and encourage grape vines and other fruit-bearing shrubs.

Did you know that many people confuse wood thrushes with brown thrashers? A wood thrush is smaller, with an all-black eye (the thrasher's is ringed in yellow) and spotted breast (not streaked). The thrasher has a longer beak and tail. 

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

SUZETTE CURTIS

Recipes by Suzette

Fall has arrived

Autumn is such a wonderfully transitional time of year. The melancholy of summer coming to an end leads us to a season full of promise. It seems as though everyone has something for which to look forward. Parents of school-aged children are happy to get back to a regular routine even though the children will usually beg to differ. Those of us who are overwhelmingly affected by mosquito bites (translation: me) can't wait for that first frost to get rid of those pesky bugs. Our local football teams keep us busy on Friday nights, Saturday afternoons and about three more days with the professional teams. Hunters get geared up for the different seasons that begin in the fall, and that in turn gives our outdoor retailers a bit of a boost. And finally, around our house, our bird dogs get awfully itchy to get out and show us what they can do. Since they deserve the run and hunt after being kept close all summer, I have decided to devote this column to bird recipes. Enjoy!

Skillet Doves With Orange-Wine Sauce

Breasts of 5 doves
3 T. Flour
Salt & pepper
3 T. butter
1 1/2 cups water
1/2 cup white wine
1/4 cup orange juice
3 T. chicken bouillon
2 T. scallions, chopped

Melt butter in skillet over medium heat. Dredge dove breasts in flour, adding salt and pepper to taste. Sauté dove breasts in butter until browned. Add remaining ingredients; turn heat to low; cover and simmer for two hours stirring occasionally. Remove breasts from skillet; keep warm. If sauce needs thickening, mix a paste of flour and water and gradually add to skillet while stirring constantly. Serve breasts over rice and pour gravy over all.

See more recipes by Suzette under "Waterfowl Hunting" at www.onwisconsinoutdoors.com.

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.

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Outdoor Port Washington in fall is great—with warm, sunny days. Fishing is still in full swing; fish from shore at Coal Dock Park. Bike our trail, rent a fat tire bike and ride the beach, or hike natural areas through the crisp air and fall foliage. Kayak or canoe off of South Beach. Perfect days. **Click on Ozaukee County.**

Ferryville has recently been given a "Bird City" designation and for good reason. Waterfowl migration is fantastic on Pool 9, and the fall fishing is great. This all set in some of the prettiest fall colors along the Mississippi bluffs. **Click on Crawford County.**

Ride the world famous Elroy/Sparta Bike Trail—a must ride with three rock tunnels. But there's more to Sparta than the bike trail. It is home to the Deke Slayton Museum, River Run Golf Course, and an Aquatic Center. Bike or stroll through the Bridges of Sparta. Each is unique and has its own story. **Click on Monroe County.**

Enjoy the Northwood's fall color while traveling along Rustic Road 62. Plan a stop at Timm's Hill County Park, home to Wisconsin's highest geographical point. The bird's eye view from atop the 88-step observation tower is spectacular. Enjoy the hiking and biking trails, fishing, playground equipment and a picnic area. Historically, our fall colors peak around October 1st. **Click on Price County.**

Ashland County in all of its autumn splendor! Come for the fall foliage and stay for the great food and exciting

events like Ashland's Mural Fest & Car Show on September 6 and the CenturyLink WhistleStop Marathon/Half-Marathon and Blues & Brews Festival October 10-11. And be sure to *Follow the Mural Brick Road* to fun and cash prizes. **Click on Ashland County.**

Take in the scenery of Calumet County during the Rural Arts Road-trip, October 10-12. Embark on this self-guided road trip to bask in the fall colors. See artists at work in their studios, enjoy adventures from hayrides to corn mazes, and savor local food. Over 80 local artists represented. **Click on Calumet County.**

Want to catch huge fall walleyes? Pat Wingo with Captain Hooks Guide Service has the following tip: use a 1/4-ounce jig tipped with a 3- to 4-inch Redtail Chub. Find deep rock bars and points on your favorite lake and slowly drift over them in the 30- to 40-foot depth range. Drag the jig and chub right on the bottom, popping it up a foot every so often. Big walleyes move to deeper water in the fall. To plan your next fishing trip **click on Oneida County.**

Don't miss the Ferryville Fall Fest at Sugar Creek on Hwy 35 on September 20. Food, vendors, fun. November 1 is Bird Migration Day. Fall colors are fantastic along Hwy 35. Raptors are migrating south, so bring binoculars. Fall fishing and hunting are in full swing. **Click on Crawford County.**

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MIKE YURK

Bassology

Don't forget the drop shot worm

It seems every few years someone comes up with another way to rig plastic worms. Plastic baits in general account for an awesome number of bass caught each year, so it is no wonder people are always playing around to find new uses for them.

One such rig is the drop shot worm. This rig has a small sinker attached to the end of the line and a worm hook tied a foot to a foot and a half above the sinker. This will raise the worm from the weeds and muck while the sinker is retrieved along the bottom.

Some 10 years ago the drop shot worm was a big rage in bass fishing; however, in the last couple of years it seems to have been ditched by many bass fishermen. Though forgotten by some, the drop shot worm has remained an effective method of fishing plastic baits and in some situations is perhaps the best worm for the job.



Remembering the drop shot rig for using the plastic worm in tough spots like flats and deep water will help you catch fish like the one Mike Yurk is holding.

Rigging the Drop Shot

Rigging the drop shot worm is easy. Although for a lot of my plastic bait fishing I use a braided line, the exception to the rule is the drop shot. I use 8-pound monofilament line on the spinning reel.

I tie the worm hook to the line by using the Palmer knot. A loop knot could also be used. The distance from the hook to the sinker is normally determined by what is on the bottom of the area I am going to fish. If there is a lot of junk, muck, vegetation and weeds on the bottom, I place the hook about 18 inches from the sinker. If there isn't much stuff on the bottom, or if you are using it over a sandy and pebbly area, then a foot above will be fine.

On the end of line I use a snap swivel to attach the sinker. This allows me to easily and quickly change weights of the

sinker depending on the depth of the water, wind or current. There are a number of specially designed drop shot sinkers available on the market, but I just use an inexpensive bell-shaped sinker. It works fine and you don't need to spend extra money on fancy sinkers when a simple, less expensive sinker will do.

For weight I normally start with a 1/8-ounce sinker. That normally seems to work well for most situations. In addition to having a couple packs of 1/8-ounce sinkers, I carry a pack of 3/16-ounce and 1/4-ounce sinkers. That covers almost any condition.


My choice of worm for a drop shot rig is any floating plastic worm with a curly tail, which I like for more action. Any of the normal colors such as purple, black, blue, motor oil or pumpkin seed all work well. I like to have a chartreuse or red curly tail to add a bit more color.

Working the Drop Shot

Using a drop shot rig is easy and no different than working most plastic baits. I cast it out, give it a couple of seconds to sink to the bottom and retrieve it by just lifting the rod tip a foot or two, drop the rod tip to pick up the slack and repeat. Every now and then just give the rod a shake and that can trigger strikes on sluggish fish.

I have found the drop shot worm to work better than any other presentation when fishing wide open flats, where there is a lot of vegetation and junk on the bottom, or when fishing deeper water. It is also very effective over sandy or gravelly bottoms. Fishing deeper water and flats is tough to do with many other plastic worm presentations but is easy with the drop shot rig.

The sinker keeps the rig on the bottom with the floating plastic worm riding just above the bottom throughout the entire retrieve. This keeps the worm at target level all the way through the retrieve back to the boat, maximizing the time your bait is in front of the fish.

The drop shot rig is one of those presentations every bass fisherman needs to have. Don't forget the drop shot rig and use it where other worm presentations can go. 

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



TREY CARSKADON

Playing The Percentages Scents

The evidence is compelling and decisive: fish, as a rule, are acutely aware of scent. One study shared that "Kamloops (trout) are so sensitive to the smell of certain bile acids that they can detect them at concentrations of less than a thimble-full in a billion gallons of water." Another study cited, "One pound of lamprey pheromones dribbled slowly down Niagara Falls could have sea lamprey responding for a month." The fact is scents play an essential role in how fish respond to their surroundings, predators and prey.

Interestingly, the use of scent products in the Great Lakes is relatively limited. Anglers simply haven't brought scents into them. More than likely it's due to early marketing efforts that made over-inflated claims that just didn't pan out. "Oh, yeah, you'll want to stand behind a tree if you use this stuff; otherwise the fish will take the lure right out of your hand."

In other parts of the country scents are used frequently and liberally. They're part of anglers' routines because they work.

It's all about playing the percentages. Sharp hooks, premium line, the right rod for the application, smooth drag, high resolution electronics, the proper knots, and dozens of other fine details all add up to tipping the percentages in your favor. Scents can be a part of that equation.

No doubt, fish sense their world not only through what they see, feel (lateral line) and hear but also what they smell. Human odors can understandably be offensive to fish. We're predators. Scent products at the very least help mask

those odors. Tobacco, gasoline or any one of hundreds of other odors can deter fish from biting.

As "attractants" scents assume a different role. Playing on the acuity of fishes' olfactory system, scents can actually pull fish to your gear. Whether it's a crawdad base for bass, alewife or herring for salmon, or anise for just about everything, scents not only get the attention of fish but result in better hook-ups, particularly when the bite is light or fish are timid.

Scents are no silver bullet. You'll find as you test them out that one day they may prefer garlic and another day it's sardine. Experiment and find out what the fish prefer.

Finally, clean lures are essential. For reasons unknown to me, Lemon Joy has proved to be an excellent choice for cleaning plugs, spoons and spinners. Scrubbing your lures down at the end of the day with a little Lemon Joy and a small scrub brush or toothbrush will assure you get the scent off and start your next trip with clean lures.

Bottom line, when fishing, swinging the percentages in your favor equates to success. Scent products are just one of the many tools you should be using to assure your success on the water.



Trey Carskadon is a full-time professional fisherman who's fished across the country. He's worked as a guide, tournament pro, outdoor writer, sportfishing advocate, TV and radio show host and is a partner in an ad and government affairs agency that represents the sportfishing industry. ...

JOEL DEBOER

Autumn Wonderland Walleyes

Changing tactics for changing times

Autumn is a wonderful time of year here in Wisconsin. Hunting and fishing opportunities abound, and, coupled with the fantastic scenery, a day in the outdoors is just made for memories. Anglers looking to cash in on some first-rate walleye fishing need embrace the aesthetics of autumn and gear up for ol' marble-eye. After all, walleyes in the fall cannot only be plentiful and aggressive, but best of all—big!

Walleye fishing during September through November is a bit different than a good number of anglers are accustomed to. For starters, while live bait is still effective, there is definite call for using large crankbaits and plastics. Simply put, the days of hauling micro jigs and big jugs of live bait to the boat are rapidly coming to a close.

Lure size, at least for anglers looking to score on the largest of specimens, is increased from more traditional smaller minnow-style crankbaits to that of the largest models, even utilizing under-sized musky-style crankbaits. With the darker water of the Wisconsin River system, crankbaits producing strong vi-

bration or having built-in rattles can be deadly due to the added sound they produce. Some of my favorite crankbaits for targeting autumn walleyes in shallower water include Rapala's Scatter Rap Minnow, Scatter Rap Shad, Flat Rap, and the Storm Thunderstick. For fishing deeper water such as over rock humps or cribs, the Storm Smash Shad and Rapala's Scatter Rap Countdown, Shad Rap, and Tail Dancer will all do the job.

With the onset of colder water temperatures, typically work your lures with a medium to slow retrieve. The lure should be moving just fast enough to maintain its most advantageous action. Occasionally adding a twitch or rip followed by a slight pause is an excellent way to elicit strikes, especially from neutral or pressured fish or when faced with a cold front.

Jig heads tipped with bulky paddle tail trailers are also quite effective during this period. I use paddle tails as large as six inches when fishing autumn walleyes, with the Mister Twister Sassy Shad being my weapon of choice. With the darker water of the Wisconsin River sys-


tem, I like the chartreuse flake and chartreuse pearl patterns for fishing during the day, while the white pearl/black back is my first choice when fishing at night. The added bulk not only helps create extra vibration but adds a superior big fish-attracting silhouette as well. An undemanding cast and straight retrieve seem to produce best when working these large jig presentations with the lure swimming just fast enough to occasionally tick the bottom. The jig and paddle tail combination is a go-to option for days when the crankbait bite is off and the action seems to have slowed.

All too often I feel we overlook the importance of being properly prepared when chasing trophy walleyes. An array of pliers, hook-outs, and forceps are a must, as is a jaw spreader for retrieving deeply inhaled lures. Quality nets such as the Conservation Series from Frabill, featuring flat linear bottoms, tangle free coating, and a 100% knotless mesh are indispensable tools for successfully landing and subsequently releasing monster eyes during the open water months.

From the Merrill dam all the way



The author's fishing partner in crime, Captain Brett Jolly, poses briefly with a crank-caught cold water walleye just prior to release.

south to Stevens Point, fishermen looking to cash in on the fall bonanza can find quality angling opportunities. One of the great things about fall walleye fishing is not only the adrenaline rush of hooking into a potential monster walleye, but the fact that very few people are out doing it. The peace and serenity of fishing on waters now void of recreational traffic is good not only for the mind but the soul. Enjoy the bounty of the north woods amidst the vibrant fall foliage. I'll see you on the water ... 

Joel DeBoer owns and operates Wisconsin Angling Adventures guide service, based out of the greater Wausau, Wisconsin, area. He specializes in muskie, walleye and smallmouth bass. You can reach him at 715.297.7573 or at wisconsinanglingadventures.com.

DAVE DUWE

Cool Water Crappies

Tools and tips for fall fishing

October is crappie time. As the days get shorter and the nights are cool, it signals the time that black crappies once again start to school. And they are hungry, very hungry. Other than the spring spawn, this is the best time of year to catch a bunch of fat and feisty crappies.

On the lakes I fish most, like Delavan Lake and Lake Geneva in Walworth County, Wisconsin, the fish will suspend over open water. In lakes in the northern parts of the state, they move to the heavy wood. The controlling factor is the depth of the lake. The deeper the body of water the greater the tendency is for the fish to suspend over open water. They are feeding on the ample fall minnows, switching to the zoo plankton food sources for the winter months.

The essential tool is a good graph. It will help you locate the suspended

schools which are readily seen on the screen. I use an 858C HD Humminbird to locate the fish. I prefer to start searching the main lake basin by main lake points. Don't start fishing until you find a school. The depth of water doesn't matter; it is the position of the fish in the water column. As a rule the fish are suspended 10 - 15 feet down in the water column with an overall water depth of 25 - 40 feet.

When schooled, crappies are relatively easy to catch as they are feeding, so one just needs to present the bait at the proper depth. This can be accomplished by slip bobber rigs, Snyder Lures, Lil' Rascal Flash (snydercompany@citlink.net), or an Arkie 1/32-ounce lead head jig on a small twister tail. I find the best colors are white, purple or chartreuse. The slip bobber and Lil'Rascal I will tip with wax worms or a minnow. The

twister tails I will fish without any live bait. I set the slip bobber at the depth of the active fish. The Lil' Rascal I will fish straight beneath the boat.


The jigging motion is a very subtle, slow up and down movement. Jigging too fast will cause you to lose contact with the bait and subtle bites will be hard to detect. For the jig/twister tail combo I make long casts with a count-down approach to achieve the desirable depth. It takes just a bit of experimentation to determine where the active fish are. Of course, the longer the pause, the deeper the jig will go. I use a slow retrieve with numerous stops and starts. Most of the time the fish hit on the pause. I prefer using a shorter 6-foot light rod with ultra light reel spooled with 4-pound Silver Thread line. It seems the shorter rod is easier to control. Try experimenting with the retrieve

Nathan Duwe with a Delavan Lake crappie
Dick Ellis Photo



to find what works for you. As a rule, slow is always pretty good for me.

I normally drift fish or use my Minn-Kota bow mount trolling motor to position my boat over the fish. Due to the relatively deep water, anchoring is tough because of the amount of anchor line you need to let out. In fall it always seems to be windy.

During the fall you catch some of the biggest crappies of the year since they are bulking up for winter. Give fall crappie fishing a try. You won't be disappointed. 

Dave Duwe is owner of Dave Duwe's Guide service and has been guiding the lakes of southeastern Wisconsin for 15 years, specializing in Delavan Lake and Lake Geneva. Find him at fishlakegeneva.com or fishdelavanlake.com.

GLENN WALKER

Fall River Bass

Hot spots in cool weather

Full time bass fishing on a river is a great opportunity to catch perhaps the most bass of the year and some of the biggest, as these fish are putting on the feed bag to beef up before the winter ahead. Some of the areas I look for bass in the fall include:

Rip-Rap: When the water temperatures begin dropping, these rock-lined banks hold heat longer, thus making the water near them warmer. These are good areas for anglers to fish in the morning as the rest of the water temperatures in the river begin to rise. Two key factors to help differentiate sections of rip-rap from one another is proximity to deep



Rigging up a Texas-rigged plastic
Josh Dahlke Photo

water and paying attention to how the current is hitting the bank.

Lily Pad Fields: As it begins to die, some of the last vegetation available for anglers to fish is the stems of lily pads. Look for these in backwater lakes that are close to deep water areas and you'll find hungry bass.

Holes: These are some of the last places an angler will fish before the boat gets put away for the winter. These holes may be—or at least be close to—the bass's wintering area. These holes could be behind a wing dam or a sand bar.

When the bass on your favorite river are putting on the feed bag this fall, a wide array of lures will work, but certain lures seem to tempt some of the biggest bass into biting. When I hit the Mississippi River during the fall, I'll for sure have these three lures rigged up:

Spinnerbait: There is something about the feel of the blades vibrating in the water and then, bam, your rod loads up which just makes an angler want to toss a spinnerbait around sunken pad stems and laydowns. The spinnerbait does a great job mimicking the baitfish that the bass are feeding upon.

Depth of water I'm fishing, current and wind dictate the weight of my bait. I'll use anywhere from a ¼-ounce all the way up to a ½-ounce if I need to. Any white or shad colored bait is a great choice.

Fishing the remaining lily pads is a great fall pattern.
Josh Dahlke Photo



Topwater: Some anglers think that once those temperatures begin to drop the topwater fun they had in August is over. You may not catch as many bass as you did in August, but you are giving yourself a good chance to catch a big ol' fall brute by tossing a topwater.


My favorite fall topwater plug is a walk-the-dog style bait. Using a short rod with a soft tip but strong backbone will aid in making your bait walk the dog. The rod will give when the bass hits, so the hooks won't pull out. This is also why monofilament line is used. It has some stretch to it and it floats, resulting in your bait getting the maximum amount of action possible.

Jerkbait: As the water temperature begins to drop and the bass start to hold in deeper water that is close to their wintering holes, a jerkbait is an ideal choice that puts your offering right in front of a fish's face. Depending on the bass's level of activity that day, your retrieve can be altered to increase the number of strikes you'll get. Some days

it is a very quick jerk with little or no pause. Other days you jerk and let your bait sit there for 10 plus seconds.

Using the same type of rod as you do for your topwaters is a good choice, as the shorter rod allows an angler to make quick, sharp jerks of the rod. The only thing I change up in my gear here is the line. I use Fluorocarbon since it sinks.

When it comes to selecting a jerkbait, I like to use a shad pattern when the water is cleaner, but if the water has some stain to it, I'll use a clown or pattern that has a bit of chartreuse in it.

Keep an eye on the forecast, and as soon as you see a stretch of sunny days with low wind, I urge you to hook up the boat and head to your favorite river for some fantastic fall fishing. Heck, even bring a radio and listen to a football game. What could be better? 

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

WILKERSON, from page 17

mer, disconnecter and associated springs and pins. This turned out to be a much better trigger than that of my AR15 produced by another manufacturer. Come to think of it, the finish on the Midwest Industries lower is also much higher.

I can definitely recommend Midwest's AR15 Basic Assembly and Troubleshooting Class, especially if you are new to ARs. You can save yourself a lot of time and avoid a lot of Internet misinformation in a class taught by an authentic armorer, as opposed to an armchair commando on a keyboard. The list of topics that Andy Yohnk covers in his class is extensive and includes everything from how to assemble the receivers and bolt carrier, what tools to use, trouble shooting, and some valuable insights. Andy teaches by doing, and what he does is assemble an entire AR15 from scratch right before your eyes. He offers tips, advice and answers to questions not only regarding the assembly but on optics, barrel twist rates, slings, ammunition and more.


When Andy first dumps the pile of parts that will eventually comprise an assembled AR15, it looks to be pretty intimidating. As he puts the rifle together, it becomes apparent that even if you are a big lummoxx, you, too, can put together an AR15 lower with or without specialized tools. In fact, a vice, 20-round magazine, a few roll pin punches, razor blade, a non-marring mallet, and some electrical tape to protect the finish are just about all of the ingredients needed to build an AR15 lower. Please be advised, however, that investing in some specialized tools makes the process much easier.

If during the assembly process you lose a detent or spring (or two) due to carelessness or bad luck, Midwest Industries has your back. Their retail store carries virtually every part that comprises an AR. They can also help you select parts and accessories to best meet your AR's purpose, whether it be hunting, target shooting or self-defense.

"Putting together an AR is a lot of fun and really enjoyable," Andy said. "At first it looks intimidating, but

after you've put together a couple, it's easy. They're pretty basic. You just need to take it step-by-step." Obtaining your parts from Midwest Industries has some real advantages. "If you do have a problem, just bring it in and we can help you out," Andy said. "We've seen everything that could possibly go wrong."

All things considered, my first AR15 assembly went pretty well without much difficulty. As a supplement to the Midwest Industries class, I found some very useful videos online that helped the process.

Follow the completion of this rifle with a Midwest Industries billet upper receiver in the next edition of *On Wisconsin Outdoors*. For more information about Midwest Industries' products and their AR15 Basic Assembly and Troubleshooting Class, see them on the Web at midwestindustriesinc.com, their retail store at W292 S4498 Hillside Road in Waukesha or call 262.896.6780. 

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

GORDON PAGEL

River Of Floating Wood ... And Leaping Smallmouth

Floating the Embarrass for smallies

The Indian word for the Embarrass River was “Okquinoc Saparo,” or floating wood. The French adopted the Indian reference and called it “La Riviere s’ Embarrass,” which essentially meant interrupted or entangled (by driftwood). The Embarrass, a major tributary to the Wolf River, runs through prime farmland in north central Wisconsin, yet the river’s banks are buffered almost continuously by lowland forest. It makes for one of the most remote float trips you will ever take within 30 miles of a major metro area. These elements come together to make the Embarrass an incredible smallmouth fishery during late summer and early fall.

Late summer on the Embarrass normally brings the lowest water levels of the year, and when combined with the incredible volume of wood that succumbs to the river, small paddle craft is the most efficient way to access this unique fishery. Smallmouth fishing starts to heat up in July, but August through early September is prime time due to low water levels. Floating wood with three feet of water or more is home. There is not a lot of natural rock in the river, but there are several stretches of rippapped shoreline, and smallies hold in those areas, too.

I have tried many different presentations on this river, but I always come back to the same lure, a safety-pin spinner with a Colorado blade in silver or gold and a white skirt. I always add plastic, and my go-to trailer this summer has been Bass Assassin Lures’ 4-inch turbo paddle tail in crystal shad or black shad colors. Depending on how fast the fish want the bait moving, I will use ¼- or 3/8-ounce spinners. I have yet to find a lure that will consistently go through the wood as effectively as a safety-pin spinner and still present properly to elicit vicious attacks by ambushing smallmouth bass.

Accurate casting and avoiding snags is key to a successful trip on the Embarrass. When fish are holding tight to the cover, 12 inches can be the difference in whether a fish smacks your bait. I have frequently casted multiple times to prime cover, just missing my intended target, and then finally I nail it on the fourth or fifth try and the water explodes as if the fish were waiting for that perfect toss. Getting snagged

on the first cast obviously has dire implications. If you go in after it, you just eliminated your opportunity to entice a fish from that spot. Yet you have to take the risk.

I like to work the edges first, but eventually I throw right into the middle of the wood. Sometimes even up and over logs. Many times it would seem impossible to pull a fish out of some of the areas I cast into, but if you never get them to strike in the first place, you’ll never have the opportunity to worry about it. Smallies are efficient leapers and frequently leap obstacles for you. Some well-timed pressure during an aerial display will often get you out of trouble. There have been times when wood has been stacked on a hole, making it impossible to cast into it. In these instances I will do some tree climbing and literally jig the hole. You have not been challenged until trying to land a 4-pound smallmouth in this manner.

There are few things more exciting than battling a smallmouth bass in close quarters, and that’s what makes this experience so special. Many of the fish in the river during the summer are migratory and come up from the Wolf River. Fourteen- to 17-inch fish are plentiful.

You need to put the Embarrass on your list of can’t miss fishing trips for next summer, but you don’t have to wait until then to tangle with these aggressive river smallies. Many of the Embarrass fish will be starting their migration back to the Wolf River by the time you read this story. The same is true of fish in other tributaries like the Little Wolf River and Waupaca River. The end of September and most of October is prime for chasing smallmouth on the Wolf. As concentrated as the fish are in these tributaries during the summer, can you imagine their numbers in the Wolf as they all funnel back to their winter home?

Get up off that couch and go fishing!
CW

For information on access points and duration of different float trip times, email Gordon at gpagel44@gmail.com. He has fished the Embarrass from Cherry Road in Black Creek all the way to New London.



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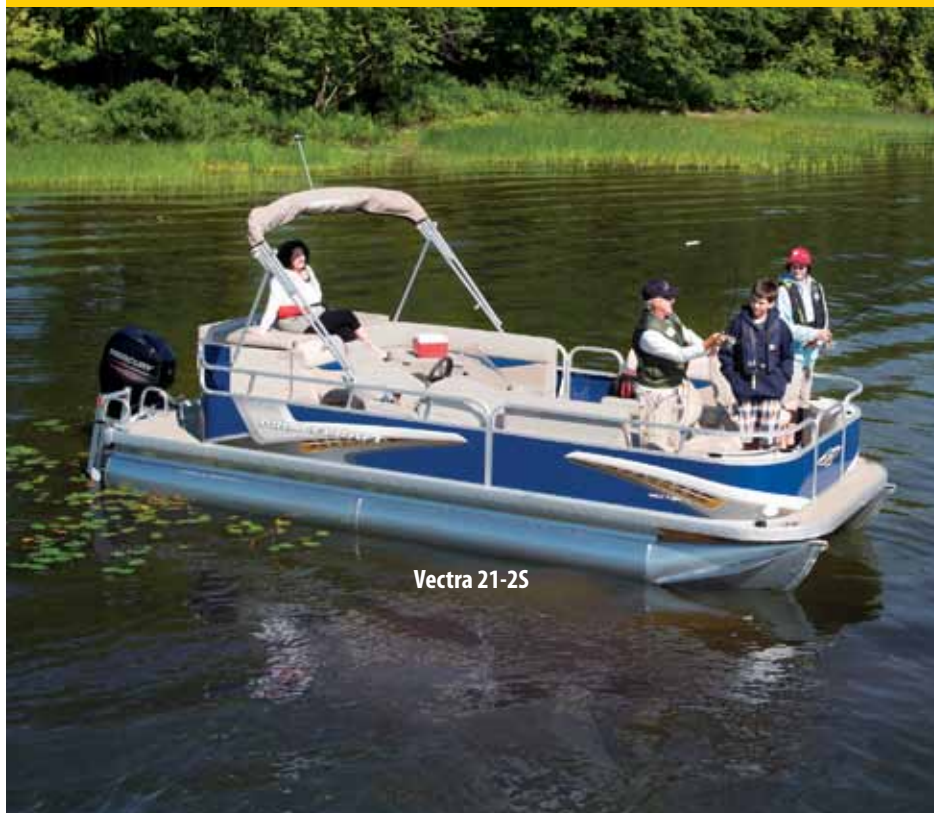
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PRINCECRAFT

PHIL SCHWEIK

Alone At The Top

Fall jerkbaits shine for muskies

For many years I have been witness to hundreds of muskies being caught, by my own hand and by other anglers in my boat. One type of lure undoubtedly out-produces any other. The jerkbait stands alone.

There are many makes of jerkbaits on the market, and under the right conditions most will work effectively. If I had to choose only one or two to arm my clients with over a season, it would be a Suick or a Bulldawg. These two jerkbaits have put more muskies in my boat with clients and when I am fishing tournaments than all of the other lures combined.

Running jerkbaits takes a little more effort and patience than most lures that we typically run. Knowing how to use them effectively, though, will make you a more successful angler.

September through November is the best time period to run jerkbait-style lures. They will work all season long and work well. But during this fall timeframe, muskies are searching for a large, easy meal, and these types of lures present just that opportunity. The angler is presenting a big target that can be worked at different speeds to trigger a response.

Adopt one of three strategies to trigger the musky strike:

1. Offer a lure that looks like natural prey when the fish is hungry or searching for food.

Both Suicks and Bulldawgs imitate natural prey when being retrieved, but with various actions they will produce a different reaction from a musky.

Under normal fishing conditions, running natural-looking lures is one of the most effective ways to catch a musky. A simple slow, steady retrieve incorporating a series of quick, short jerks periodically will create enough action to entice a feeding musky. This method is most commonly utilized when targeting deep water muskies, and this is where the Bulldawgs earn their unsurpassed reputation.

2. Create a stimulus movement that will push a musky's internal response system into attack mode.

This is where the jerkbait really shines. When muskies are in a negative or submissive mood and are not feeding, there is a way to help provoke a strike. Create such a disturbance that a musky cannot resist but react ... and attack.

Once you've tossed your bait out re-

trieve it in such a way that it seems almost impossible for a musky to even be able to catch it. With a series of extremely quick rips and fast, hard pulls, create bait that is moving through the water so fast and erratically that it basically triggers the musky's internal instincts to attack.

If you doubt that a musky can catch a lure being retrieved like this, try it. You cannot reel bait in quick enough or erratically enough to outrun or out-manuever a closing musky intent on the meal. Believe me, I have tried and this system works!

3. Place the lure so blatantly close that the musky cannot resist striking.

For most anglers this is the final piece of the puzzle. Knowledge of your water is imperative for this to work, especially when muskies are in an extremely lethargic non-feeding mood. If you have an idea of a particular musky's location, this "up front and personal" method really stands out.

Retrieving the lure in a submissive manner is the key to getting the musky's attention and making this method work. Once the lure is tossed into the general area of a known holding musky, you want



Phil Schweik client James Borelli with a Wisconsin River musky that fell to a jerkbait in October.


to begin with letting it fall with a slow drop. No quick jerks or rips to bring it in yet.

Give it a few seconds and then retrieve the lure with slow, steady pulls and pauses. Allow the lure plenty of time to just hang in the fish's face. This is where the weighted Suick explodes into action. Muskies can't resist seeing this lure just hanging there, tempting them into striking.

Each of the three triggering methods works. They all have their time and place,

but knowing which one to use at the right time is the final key to success.

With the fall season here, go out and give these jerkbait methods a try. And expect success.

Fish on. 

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

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- All vulcanized construction-ozone resistant compound
- Completely insulated with thick sponge rubber
- 600 grams of 3M™ Thinsulate™ Ultra Insulation for warmth
- Molded outsole for better traction



WIN61811MOB Treemont 8"

- 100% waterproof construction with Winchester waterproof system
- Full grain leather with nylon insert upper
- 800 grams of 3M™ Thinsulate™ Ultra Insulation
- Moisture wicking lining
- Pull tab for easy on and off
- Camo wrapped EVA midsole
- Rugged rubber outsole
- Removable orthotic insole



WIN62006MOB Talon II 16"

- 100% waterproof construction with bootie construction
- Leather with 900 denier nylon inserts upper
- Snakeguard™ lining for protection against snake bites
- Removable insole for comfort
- Rugged rubber outsole for superior traction
- EVA midsole for extra cushion
- Strong laces and rust proof hooks and D-rings



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