

FREE

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Vol. 10, Issue 5



# On Wisconsin Outdoors



PHOTO BY JOHN FAUCHER

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JOHN LUTHENS

## Natives In The Mist

### *A wild history of brook trout in Wisconsin*

Native brook trout rose through the mist of Wisconsin's waters from a deep legend of wild. Prairie grass swaying beneath shadows of limestone springs along Mississippi River bluffs. Pastured streams in the central regions, waking with the crowing of pheasant roosters and fed to life by seeps of ground-water down the acorn oak valleys. Alder bogs and beaver swamps, hidden deep and nurturing the wild rivers and white-pine whispers of the north.

The earliest water was virgin and the territory stunning. Winding waterways were temperature-controlled by springs and the stream corridors shaded in cover. Graveled spawning beds were uncut by blacktop and rusted culverts. In the streams and frigid spring ponds that had yet to be tapped by agriculture, darting from beneath the windfalls that were yet untouched by the lumberjack axe, native brook trout smashed to the surface across the whole of Wisconsin.

The ecology of the region was purely suited for native trout, but it also beckoned the diverse and hearty breed of settlers who patiently carved the distinct shape of our state from the miles of endless timber. The immigrants brought more than their heritage. They brought brown and rainbow trout: fighting fish with line-pounding excitement to match the heart and soul of the outdoorsmen who helped build our water's blue-ribbon heritage.

Lumber fell and fields were planted. Remote streams and rivers gave birth to budding towns and cities. It was a matter of progress and civilization that spawned dams and roads, cutting the natives from their spawning beds along the gravelled stream heads. Browns and rainbow thrived in the warming waters of the oncoming future, while native brookies forced a retreat into shrinking waters of cool isolation.



*The true beauty of a native brook is reflected in its remote and wild surroundings.*

Legends tell of brook trout measured in pounds and bushel baskets overflowing with square-tailed gold. Now, for the most part, they are measured in inches. Brook trout fishing has more to do with whispering rumors and adventure than trophy catches; more about searching the remaining wild water and tiny springs that hold the last of the natives than returning home with enough for a fish fry.

Secret signs point the way for today's tight-netted society of brook trout fishermen: the coldest of water, lifting with ghostly steam in the mornings and evening to reveal rising rings, swelling

*continued on page 5*

DENNY MURAWSKA

## Fish Mounts: Real Or Replica?

### *Sentimental value of the real deal*

Taxidermy, or "moving skin" (from Latin), is a creative endeavor like few others. Yesterday I was finishing up two fish mounts. They fell off the back of a truck when a couple was moving. It was a hard landing. Really hard. If you had tied these to a rope and dragged them for 10 miles down a gravel road, it could not have been worse. While many in my profession turn down such work, I have a soft spot for fixer-uppers. These mounts went far beyond that.

First of all, the original "taxidermy" was horrid from the beginning. The poses and anatomy were grossly distorted. The painting was childish. Still, it was evident these fish were important remembrances of a father who had caught them and had passed on. I accepted the challenge. The more I worked on them, the more I thought about my own father and his advanced age. Taking things a step further, I pondered my own mounts. Of course, I hope someday they will be of sentimental value to a family member that re-

members days spent on the waters with me.

These days, fish replicas seem to be all the rage. A large majority of my work consists of painting fine castings of real fish to match an angler's proud trophy. Yet, nothing can compare to the sentimental value of real taxidermy: a skin mount! The actual fish you pulled from the waters, carefully preserved to last a lifetime and more. A treasure to focus on and dream of when the cold winds keep you hemmed indoors, harkening back to the warm summer air and placid lake surface fished one evening in days gone by.

As I worked, it dawned on me that I do not have a single fish to remember either of my folks by. Yes, Mom was an avid angler as well and still cannot understand why I release fish that should be battered and eaten. So, as my folks draw near to the end of life and I stumble around in the autumn of my existence here on

*continued on page 6*

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TYLER FLORCZAK

# Savoring Springtime Activities This Year

## *Appreciating time in the outdoors*

The doldrums of winter are now a distant memory, meaning a lot of free time to devote to fly fishing big-bellied bluegills, outsmarting elusive toms, targeting trophy muskies and prepping for this fall's deer and bear hunting seasons. As of late, though, I've found myself becoming more grateful for my time in the wilderness, especially after a few recent outdoor adventures where several wildlife interactions occurred. It's almost as if my appreciation level for nature has spiked. But why?

Most of these instances—watching the final sheet of ice dissipate on the Chetek chain, a shed hunting excursion with my dog, Stella, and catching my first open water fish of the season—were relatively common for people like me in the Northwoods. None of these experiences yielded a trophy at the end or was remotely close to what I would deem “successful.” But for some reason they were extremely enjoyable and refreshing experiences. Maybe being a part of nature was all I needed on those days. After

more self-reflection, I wondered if I'm possibly getting wiser in my older age (highly unlikely) or starting to see things from a different perspective.

Most of my outdoor career, since I was about 3 years old, has been centered upon my competitive drive—eternally wanting to out-fish my older brother or dethroning my dad from his untouchable pedestal. From the beginning, I've always wanted to catch the most and biggest fish, shoot the oldest, baddest buck and build a reputation as one of the top outdoorsmen around.

Sure, I've had some incredible highs in my hunting and fishing career. But without all of the lows, like the individual failures, family fiascos and skunked fishing expeditions—along with the trials and tribulations—those highs wouldn't be as special.

Extra down time lately has helped me realize that the journey is my favorite part of successful outdoor experiences. The end result, like harvesting a trophy whitetail or wall-hanger walleye, is sweet but the path to


finding success is oftentimes just as rewarding. Maybe I've spent too much time honed in on a prize or trophy and have been overlooking the true purpose of my time in the outdoors.

So, this spring, I've vowed to show a deeper appreciation for Mother Nature. There are many unique and eventful instances that occur in the springtime, and I'm going to cherish every chance I get to take those events in. Some outdoor plans I have set for May and June that won't involve casting or shooting include: shining the spawning walleyes running in near-by creeks and rivers, planting a vegetable garden with my wife, prepping for our new Wire-Haired Pointing Griffon puppy that will arrive in mid-summer, along with several other activities outdoors.

When venturing into the woods, onto the water, or even in the yard this spring, head out with a good attitude and zero expectations. Enjoy the time outside and be sure to leave appreciative and fortunate for



*Shining walleyes as they run up creeks and rivers is a unique springtime activity enjoyed each April in northwestern Wisconsin. Pictured is a pod of males surrounding a big female walleye.*

the outdoor opportunities we have here in Wisconsin. 

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

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**PHIL SCHWEIK**

## Wisconsin River Fishing

### *Read the water, reap the multi-species reward*

As we enter the summer months, anglers begin their annual pursuit of their favorite species. One angler chooses to chase muskies while another targets walleyes. Each angler knows what trips his or her trigger, and everyone has that special place to pursue their passion.

Here in central Wisconsin near Wausau, anglers find virtually any passion on the same water; the Wisconsin River system is a multi-species goldmine! With chances at almost every imaginable fresh water species, including real trophy fish, why look anywhere else? When fishing the Wisconsin River, you can head out to any one of a number of locations and immediately be in great fishing water. There are no bad spots on the river, and you can target all or any one of a number of different species.

Initially, you may just want to journey down the river or through the vast backwater areas and lakes that make up the river system to enjoy the incredible scenery and become acclimated with the Wisconsin. Although a quick look around and wetting the line when entering one of Wisconsin's major veins will verify that there are great fishing opportunities everywhere, as an angler with decades of experience on the river, I come with a definite plan. I am going fishing and I know what to look for and where I want to start. First and foremost is to look at and study the water flow.

Water flow, including the speed, height and clarity of the river on a given day is always the number one factor in fish location on a river system. When river flow is determined, deciding on the best place to actually start fishing takes on a

*Dave and Noah Ferdel with a nice musky.*




*Ron Hall with a big walleye.*



more defined search for current breaks, islands and channel edges. These are the primary holding locations for any of the different species I may be targeting.

Different than if you were fishing on a lake, learning to read the water on the river is imperative to achieving greater success. Subtle ripples may indicate a shallow riffle, a submerged tree or boulder, or perhaps just a current seam where the current is flowing in two different directions. But why is the current flowing in two different directions? Maybe you have a deep break on an inside turn or a hidden underwater point. Like any ongoing curriculum with the ultimate goal of scoring more, these are some lessons that you will learn as you venture out on a river system more often.

A river system has so much to offer. The fish are here and an angler has to do relatively little to find success. Learning to read the water is not rocket science, but diligence and simply placing the bait on those spots you think look good will lead to fewer failures, more successes and more fish in your boat.


Once you invest more time on a river system learning how to read the different features, the road map is basically laid right out for you. All you have to do is follow it. 

*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.*

#### **LUTHENS, from page 3**

above the banks with a summer shower to entice the natives from beneath mossy logs to see what the rain has brought down for dinner. Wild orchids and floating gardens of green, bog mud squelching beneath waders and smelling like age-old secrets.

Crawl low beneath the humid tangles and measure out a patient drift. Mosquitoes, the birds of summer, and the rustling of unseen shapes in the brush will let you know when the time is right. A fallen log with the roots sunk deep into the current looks mysterious. Feel the tap-tap of your rod tip and the pounding of your heart as line pulls into the darkest water.

Admire the purple-haloed spots and the red fins. Peer closely at the greenish tracks along the brook trout's back. They are more than the distinct badges of brook trout. They are maps for the far-going fisherman to decipher. They tell of the future and they tell of the past. They tell the tale of native life sprung from the mists of the wild. 

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



"GOOD FLY. BAD PRESENTATION."



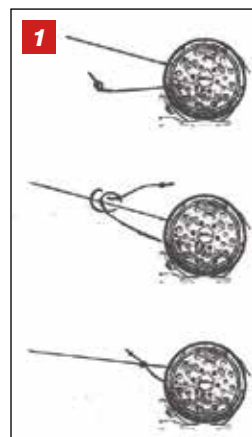
JERRY KIESOW

# Fly Fishing In Wisconsin Knots

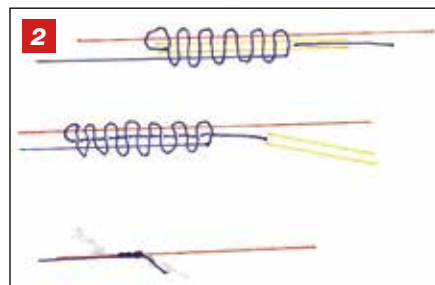
Last issue I mentioned that “I had hoped to show you a few knots, but not today. Maybe next time?” Well, it’s next time.

The knots we tie when using our fly fishing equipment (or any fishing equipment, for that matter) are extremely important. They are the weakest connection between you and your fish. Knots can and will weaken your leader material, especially if you do not wet it before pulling the knot tight. Why? The friction caused when pulling the mono heats up and weakens the mono.

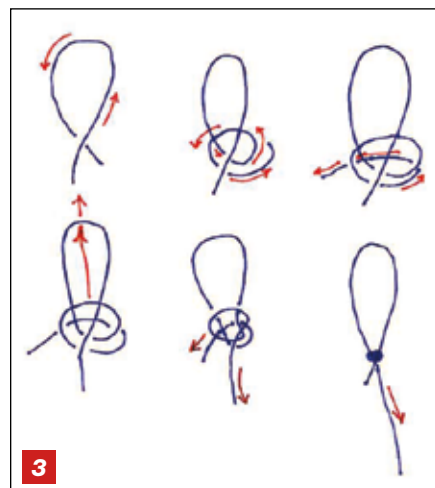
Here are seven illustrations that show how to tie the knots that can be used in any and all circumstances you will run into during your fly fishing adventures. Yes, there are more but these work for me, so they should work for you, too.



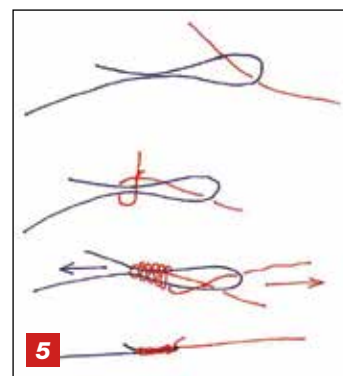
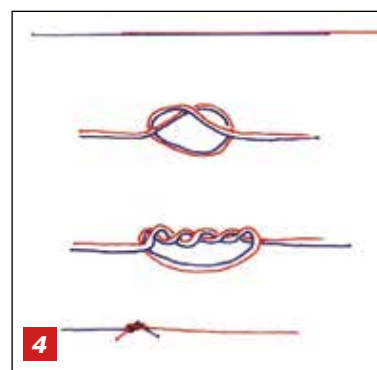
The Arbor knot (Number 1) is used to attach your backing line to your reel.



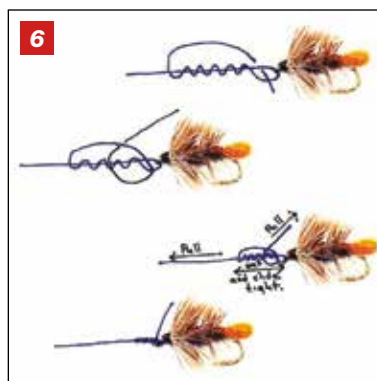
To the backing, we tie the fly line with the Nail Knot (Number 2). Except today, we use an inch of a straw instead of a nail. Note: this allows us to insert the backing line through the straw instead of sliding it alongside of the nail.



To the line, we attach the leader with either the same Nail Knot or connect the two with a loop. If your leader does not have a loop, you can make one by tying a Perfection Loop Knot (Number 3).




As we learned last issue, leaders have tippets, which are used up as we change flies, thereby making it necessary to add new tippet material. To do this, we tie either a Double Surgeon Knot (Number 4) or, if the diameter of the tippet is greatly different than the leader, we use the Albright Knot (Number 5).



Finally, we have to tie the fly to the tippet. Here, I use two knots, the Improved Clinch (Number 6) for dry flies and the Non-Slip Mono Loop knot (Number 7) for everything else. I like the Non-Slip because it allows the fly to move and, therefore, the fly has more action and more appeal. At least that is my story and I am sticking to it.


There you have it: seven knots you can use when you fish with flies (or anything else, for that matter). If you have problems understanding these illustrations, see them all on the Web.

See you in the river.

Keep a good thought! 

We know Jerry enjoys all aspects of the outdoors (not only fly fishing). That was proven in his first book: “Tales of The Peshtigo Putzer” (now out of print and a collector’s item, but I still have a few), and his second book: “Photos, Poems, and a Little Bit of Prose” reinforces that truth. Check it out on his website: [www.jerrykiesowoc.com](http://www.jerrykiesowoc.com). They make great gifts.

## MURAWSKA, from page 3

Earth, I decided I need a memorial for both of them. Not a tombstone, not an urn. A fish. A fish to grace the walls of my home, with perhaps a few words beneath it. Neither of them walk very well or very far these days, but they can sit in a boat and fish. It will not matter whether the mount is large or small, a bluegill, largemouth or even a rock bass. I need to experience once again the joy of watching them catch a fish and then mount it in a position of honor where I can gaze at it the rest of my days and remember and dream. 

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



Fish mount after a hard, highway landing.



Fish mount restored to a lifelike representation.





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GARY ENGBERG

# Gary Engberg Outdoors

## Dirty water spring walleyes

Anglers have been fishing Wisconsin rivers for over a month and the fishing has been up and down, just like the thermometer. Every few days a frontal system goes through the state, and any pattern that I've found changes with the weather and I have to start over trying to find active fish.

Anglers that I've talked with have been confronted with the same problem. Besides the spring weather, Wisconsin's river anglers have had to deal with another variable that makes catching fish even more difficult: the dirty and high water that the recent rains have brought to Wisconsin's rivers. I've seen the Fox, Wolf, Crawfish, Rock, Wisconsin, and



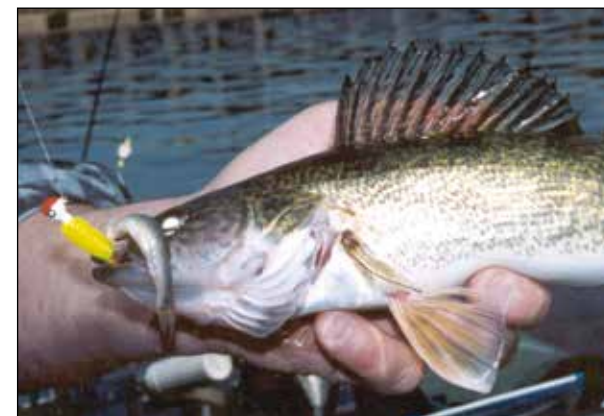
Good eating sized walleyes caught in high water below the Prairie du Sac Dam at Sauk City.

Mississippi Rivers recently and they all are flooding, have a strong current and are the color of chocolate milk. Visibility is only a few inches. So, how can a fish see your bait? Most of these rivers are stained normally, but the rain has made these waters dirtier, their current stronger, and some rivers have flooded their banks. If you would try most normal walleye techniques like jigging, rigging, or trolling in these waters, you would have a tough time catching any fish species.

What should a river angler do to catch fish when confronted with these difficult conditions? The first thing is to stop thinking like a walleye fisherman and more like a bass angler. Why? Walleyes will move into shallow water and vegetation when they're confronted with strong current and dirty water. Another reason why walleyes and other fish move shallow is that the baitfish they feed on are also moving into the shallow water to avoid the river's current.

Instead of using live bait and light jigs and line as most walleye anglers would, I take a page out of the bass anglers' textbook and change techniques. Here is what I do when facing these tough conditions:

- 1) Switch to a heavier jig (1/4- to 1/2-ounce) instead of the normal (1/16- to 1/8-ounce) jig used when walleye fishing.
- 2) Swim the jig fast enough to just "tic" the bottom. Dragging a jig would result in constant snags. This is why you have to reel fast enough to prevent your jig from constantly being snagged.
- 3) Switch from live bait to a scented plastic ringworm,




A river walleye caught shallow on a jig and plastic.

which will stay on your jig longer while attracting these shallow water fish with flash and vibration. Since it is so difficult for fish to see, vibrations and rattles help fish hone in on your bait.

4) Switch from the 6# mono normally used for walleyes to the coffee color mono in a 10 # test. The coffee color blends in perfectly with the stained river water. The 10 # test line allows you to pull out of most snags that you'd encounter while shallow. You're still going to lose some jigs, but I'd constantly be losing jigs and re-tying with lighter line. Bring a few brightly-colored jigs, which will show up better in dirty water and can make a difference.

The last thing I do when trying to catch walleyes under tough conditions is to look for cleaner water. All fish will seek out cleaner water if possible, so check side channels and backwaters.

When confronted this spring with tough conditions, go shallow, use a heavier jig and a stronger line. 

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

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AN 'UP NORT' REPORT BY DAN MOERICKE

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DAN MOERICKE

## An 'Up Nort' Report

### The first cast curse (and other bad karma)

It's happened to all of us at one time or another. You pull up to your favorite fishing spot, make a cast and immediately catch a fish. Smugly, you think, "Oh boy, this is going to be great!" Wrong. The next three hours go by without so much as a nibble. How can that happen? A school of one? Where did they go? What gives?

Well, my friends, what you have there is what I call the "first cast curse." Or, as John Lennon sang, "Instant karma's gonna get you." Apparently, the fishing gods have some weird sense of humor where they giggle at raising your hopes immediately only to crush them slowly over the ensuing hours. It seems you're almost better off throwing your first cast up into a tree just to avoid it.

When ice fishing, occasionally you can

combat the curse by "hole hopping." Catching a fish the first time you drop a bait down the hole happens. Not catching fish the second/third/fourth time you drop a bait back down the hole happens even more. The only answer is to make a "first cast" into a lot of different holes.

And the first cast curse doesn't just apply to fishing, either. Hunting also has its share of bad karma that shadows high initial optimism. And the higher the optimism, the longer the shadow. For example, having a big buck cross the road in front of you while driving to the woods frequently is a precursor to a deerless day on the stand. (While it kind of makes you want to drive to your hunting spot with your eyes closed, I don't recommend doing that.) Hearing turkeys

gobbling when you get out of your vehicle in the pre-dawn darkness is another karma-inducing omen. Somehow, they seem to sense your optimism and either vaporize or go subterranean once daylight arrives. Jumping a grouse a hundred yards from your vehicle will often be counteracted with three hours of futile, bird-less hiking. I'm not a duck hunter, so I can't address that, but I suspect it's the same deal.

On the golf course, crushing a bunch of drives off the practice tee will almost guarantee a day full of hooks, pulls and slices once you're actually on the course. And draining long putts on the putting green is an almost surefire recipe for multiple three putts during the round. Same curse, different sport.



*Sometimes the first fish of the day also ends up being the last fish of the day.*

Even as fans, we've all been witness to some form of the curse. The Packers march almost effortlessly down the field for a touchdown on their first drive and then can barely manage a first down for the rest of the half. Or the Brewers score two runs in the first inning and, well, you know, eight

*continued on page 12*

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**KYLER CHELMINIAK**

## What's Going To Be Your Favorite Memory This Summer?

### *How collegiate fishing has built greater appreciations for the outdoors*

Imagine being a part of a record-setting event, one where over 250 college fishing teams gather at one boat ramp, competing for one trophy. Or imagine waking up for another tournament where you have to shovel two inches of snow and ice off the front deck of the boat. How about watching your roommate walk across the weigh-in stage at the biggest spectacle in all of bass fishing, the Bassmaster Classic? Once in a lifetime you have these kinds of experiences, and as thrilling as it was to have them happen all in one spring, there's something else that will stick with me even more.

Two high school students I met through Younglife asked me to go fishing one day. I had known these guys for years but never connected with them much. That is, until one of them was passed down a Bass Tracker. Then their bass fishing itch started to emerge.

One morning, the three of us loaded up

and went down to a private lake we had permission to fish. It was the absolute perfect springtime condition with an early orange sunrise hatched from a warm, moonlit night, and we knew it was time for these unpressured fish to put on a pre-spawn feedbag. We put the trolling motor down right away and immediately one of the kids caught one, then we caught five, and then even before noon, we were creeping close to 70, including some really nice bass.

At one point in the day, they asked why I didn't eat bass. I told them that I'll eat bluegills, crappies, perch, walleyes, and pretty much any other finned swimmer, but I would never be able to kill a bass. Then I was able to share with them a personal part of myself, of how bass fishing impacted me; how it brought me closer to family and friends and gave me opportunities to go to college and travel the country. Guys aren't ever comfortable with being open and sincere with one another, but in those



*An unforgettable summer day enjoyed by lifelong friends on a small lake in southcentral Wisconsin.*

few hours on a boat together, we started to create a bond: one we wouldn't have experienced without going fishing that day. And by starting that conversation, it gave them assurance that someone else was willing to listen to them, too. High school is not an

easy time for a lot of students, so it is immeasurably helpful for kids to have someone they can trust.

Much of my fishing involves intense competition and painstaking attention to detail, so having days where I can grab a couple of friends or family members and fish with no pressure is what really refuels my passion. Fishing can provide motivation, thrill and adrenaline, but there is nothing more significant than the relationships we can develop. I'm so thankful to have been introduced to fishing at a young age, so I never had to wish, "If only I had started sooner, I wouldn't have \_\_\_\_." Some people claim that fishing is their escape from reality, but as I see it, fishing is the reality.

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

**WAYNE MORGENTHALER**

## Bluegills On My Mind

### *Locating more sunnies in spring*

The bluegill is one of the most colorful fish in the spring. The males have all those bright hues of orange, red and blue. Every lake seems to have its own special colors and sizes. I have caught bluegills that were almost all blue, which is very rare, and I always wondered if they were the albino of the fish family like white is to certain types of wild animals. The darker the water the darker the bluegills. In clear lakes, the colors are more distinctive and lighter. The hue of the water never seems to make much difference in the size of the fish. I have caught big bluegills in both types of waters, although my very biggest ones have come from deep, clear lakes.

Sunnies are best targeted when the temperatures reach around 70. Another tip off will be those loud, shrill sounds of tree frogs. If you still need more evidence, look for those pretty yellow flowers called dandelions. Usually, in the spring, you will get some strong southern winds and the temperatures will be very warm. If I get a string of at least three days in a row of these temperatures, I get the fly rod

out and head for a shallow lake. The big bluegills find the shallow warm water and pretend they are in Florida. They will be in about 6 inches of water and as close to the shore as possible. You need to make long casts and be very quiet when approaching, just like when you are out turkey or deer hunting. I like to fish looking into the sun so as not to leave a shadow from my canoe. At this early time of the year, you will catch one or two before spooking them. I keep going along the shoreline looking for small V's in the water. I think they are just cruising and stretching out those dormant muscles. Generally, after an hour, I return to my original spots and catch a few more.

Carried along with me is an ultra-light spinning rod with 4-pound test baited with a pink and white mini mite. This time of the year is when crappies spawn and are found in near any type of brush or stumps. Stumps that are submerged are great spots, but it helps to know your water.

The best luck I have fly fishing is with rubber spiders. I tie my own and use white sponge bodies along with orange

*Author with male bluegill.*



rubber legs. The combination of colors helps me see the spider better and tend to land softly on the water's surface. I love to see that fish swimming to the bug and make a beautiful swirl or just suck it in. Sometimes I get a little impatient and jerk too soon. When contact is made with the bluegill, the fight is on. They are tremendous at getting their body at a side angle to give themselves the most strength. After about three or four powerful runs, they finally surrender.

Sounds of birds, frogs and wild turkey signal to me that spring is here. To all my bluegill buddies, here's wishing you a great season.

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



MIKE YURK

# From Hard Water To Open Water

## *Ice fishing lessons for more summer bluegill*

Winter has slipped away in the rearview mirror and we have a summer of fishing in front of us. Although we may want to forget winter, there is much we summer bluegill fishermen can learn from our hard water fishing experiences.

Winter bluegill fishermen have paved the way to success by using lighter equipment, smaller baits and being mobile in order to find and stay with actively-feeding fish. Those lessons are just as important in the summer. The ice fishing gear may be gathering dust and spider webs in the basement or garage, but those baits we caught bluegills with in the winter will still catch them in summer.

### Ice Jigs

My personal favorite ice jig for summer bluegill fishing is the Demon; however, I have half a dozen or more plastic boxes of ice jigs in my panfish box that all work. My two favorite colors are white with pink or chartreuse.

Just like ice fishing, I bait these ice jigs with wax worms. Years ago, you could only find wax worms during the winter. Because more people have discovered ice jigs and wax worms work all year long, bait shops now carry wax worms throughout the year. Wax worms are just the right size bait for bluegills.

One of the other things we have learned from ice fishing for bluegills is to use small floats, because these fish can strike lightly. During the summer this can pose some problems. In the winter, we just drop a line down an ice hole, so a little fingernail-sized bobber works just fine. However, during the summer we need to use a little bigger float so we can cast, but we need to use the smallest floats we can get away with.

I prefer to use light balsa, plastic or foam stick floats. Even those at times, especially if it is windy, are difficult to cast. In that case, use floats with a lead ring around them to give them a bit more weight for casting. I place a float from three to four feet above the ice jig. I do not put any addition-

al weight on the line. The ice jig will drop on its own without a sinker. The sinker just absorbs light strikes from finicky bluegills, and without a sinker the float is much more responsive.

### Keep Moving


One of the other techniques we have learned from ice fishing is fishermen need to move around to find and stay with active, feeding bluegills. That is true during the summer as well. Leave the anchor at home. Using the trolling motor is the ticket to summer bluegill fishing success.

The most productive summer bluegill fishing will be found along banks, brush piles and weed beds. I work these areas, moving around or along them with the trolling motor keeping the boat a casting distance away. Throughout the summer, regardless of how hot the weather may be, I usually find most of my bluegills in less than six feet of water.

Lessons we have learned from ice fishing will help us get more and bigger bluegills



*Using small ice jigs with wax worms and light floats are lessons learned from ice fishing that will help us catch more bluegills in summer.*

during warm weather. Lighter gear, moving with the fish, and using the same baits we use during the winter will help us land more bluegills this summer. 

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

TOM LUBA

# Targeting Spring Bass

## *Wood, weeds and warmth*

Let's face it. Spring is like a maddening yo-yo. Early temperature spikes call largemouth bass to the shallows to spawn. Then Ma Nature puts on the brakes via a nasty cold front and things go south.

So, when the time is right, where do you look for shallow spring bass? Look for wood. Look for emerging weeds. And warmth certainly does help. Warm weather starts weed growth, on the shallow inside edge. Heat is also absorbed by wood. Find those types of cover and you're in the ballpark.

Bass use developing weeds as a safe house before nesting. Wood holds heat and can be the absolute best cover some days, as the bass will flock to wood above anything else. I've seen days where it seemed like every piece of wood, stump or laydown had bass on it. Sometimes several fish use a single piece of cover.

Once the water gets above 50 degrees, the fish gradually move into the shallows, first to feed and then to spawn. Prior, the best plan is to move slightly deeper, even as far as the first drop off, where the fish will hold while conditions improve. For cold snaps after the water warms, the fish usually don't go overly deep unless deeper water is very close to the nesting area. I look tight to cover at this point, as the bass

snuggle up to stumps or back into weed beds.

Spring success also depends on using the right bait at the right time. Jigs play a large part in spring fishing, especially when you find an area that draws a group of fish. Jigs are a big fish bait and I used to like to load one with a pork frog to make it a mouthful. But with Uncle Josh discontinuing their pork frog trailers, a 3- or 4- inch Power Bait Chigger Craw is a great choice. Black and blue is a hard jig color combination to beat in the spring, but if the water is clear, also consider a green pumpkin hue.


Another excellent bait for emerging weeds is a Senko. Spring bass can be mesmerized by the slow rocking descent the bait employs. And, if they don't hit it on the way down, let it sit, as much of the time they'll just pick it up off the bottom. Occasionally, they run with it, but they also may just suck it in and sit tight, so line watching makes good sense here. With a bait like a jig, you'll get more noticeable bites, but the Senko is pretty awesome in its own right.

Two baits that also shine are search baits that cover ground. The Z-Man Chatterbait, or bladed jig, has pretty much supplanted the spinnerbait nowadays. It's designed to do a similar thing. This bait throws off vibration via a wob-



*This bass took a Senko off bottom in a spawning channel.*

ble and doesn't have a big flash. It certainly works, especially along weed edges and wood. As does the square bill shallow crankbait. These baits, like the Bill Lewis Echo, are designed to wobble and the bill is made for deflecting off of cover, like stumps, laydowns and rocky rip-rap. Go with brown craw, baitfish or bluegill colors and expect the strike after the bait bounces off cover.

To maximize your spring bassin', fish the shallow lakes first, as they warm quicker. Then move on to the deeper ones. That way, you can spend as much time as possible on shallow fish, including, hopefully, your biggest bass of the season. 

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



KYLE CICHANOFSKY

# Fishing In Minocqua

## Summer heat brings bass fishing you can't beat!

It was a long and boring ride, three hours to be exact, but well worth the boredom. The lake that I was about to arrive at has the best smallmouth fishing I've ever experienced, and it is also known for its trophy musky. As we arrive at my friend Nick's cabin at 2:00 PM, we rush to get our bags unpacked. "Take it easy, boys; we have plenty of time to fish," Mr. E. (Nick's Dad) said to calm us. But it didn't. Within two minutes Nick and I had unpacked the truck and packed the boat.

As we got into the boat, I smelled the familiar summer breeze that drew me back so many times before. Nick jumped into the captain's seat and drove us away to paradise. "Only in Wisconsin," Nick yelled over the motor. A spray of the refreshing water hit our faces. "You can't find a place like this anywhere else in the world," Nick exclaimed. As we approached the tall weeds, I plucked my rod from its holder and took a cast right in


the middle of the grass. "And now it begins," I whispered.

Immediately, I felt the tension of the thick grass on my line, which could easily be mistaken as a bite, but I knew better. I slowly turned my reel handle and stood stiff as a board jiggling my Senko. Then, wham! I felt a great tug on the end of my line. Quickly, I stepped back and set the hook as if there were a musky on the other end of my line. With a splash, the fish jumped out of the water like an image from a movie and dove back into the thick weeds.

I tightened my drag and yanked my rod backwards with one powerful blow. Again, the fish jumped, feeling the tug from my attempt to set him free of the weeds. Suddenly, a massive amount of weight dropped off my rod. Free of the weeds now, it was just the fish and me. First, it tried to take me straight back in the weeds, but I kept my hand tight against my line preventing him from

doing so. Then he took me left for the drop off, but this time my hand slipped. Whoosh! The line zipped out of my reel faster than a bullet. I quickly regained focus and reeled in with my hands shaking more with every turn. Fighting a bass on light line and tackle is the best! After about five minutes, the fish gave up. He had lost the fight; I had him in my grasp.

"The net!" I yelled, a little louder than I should have. Nick sprinted over to my side of the boat and netted the fish. "That's a chunk bass, Dude!" Nick exclaimed. "Nice job, Chick!" Mr. E. cheered. I stared down at the largemouth, and he stared back at me with his dark, beady eyes. I carefully unhooked him and made sure to get a picture. I got down on my knees and revived the fish after his fight. He was a beautiful beast. I gave him one last push and let go. He swam back down to the murky bottom in hopes of finding a real meal. I picked up my rod and casted out my line again hoping to find his cousin.

As I was jigging my Senko, I thought maybe it was the summer breeze, maybe it was the sunset, or maybe it was the mosquitoes driving me insane, but that fish was special. It had a fight like no other. If there were one way I had to describe bass fishing in Wisconsin, the encounter with fish would be how I'd do it. 

Kyle (Chicky) Cichanofsky is an 8th grader at Bay View Middle School and has a fishing group with his friends called WiscoFishCo. Visit Chicky's youtube channel, Instagram page, or Facebook page at WiscoFishCo. Chicky's column is sponsored by Defender Baits Company.



Kyle and his friend Nick with Kyle's 16-inch, 2-pound bass.

### THIS ISSUE, OWO INTRODUCES ITS FIRST YOUTH WRITER, 14-year-old

Kyle Cichanofsky. A love of the outdoors often begins during childhood. We at OWO want to share a kid's perspective on fishing, hunting and generally just having fun outdoors. Read on to learn more about Kyle and see outdoor sports through a fresh lens.

"I got into fishing through my dad and my grandpa. I grew up around fishing, and when I got bored, my dad would take me fishing. It was a really fun way to bond with my family. But it is also a way for me to learn new skills.

I love writing; it is something I've been good at since I was little. I started writing my first stories in the beginning of 5th grade (not knowing it would turn into a job), and I kept them in a folder and read them to my family after I was finished. But as I got older I realized that this could be a possible career for me. So, when my dad told me about being able to write for OWO, I immediately went into that folder I created three years ago and started editing my stories.

My favorite times of year are fall and spring. Those two seasons alone make up 80% of my hunting and fishing time, spring turkeys and trout, bass, and the occasional walleye. Fall brings deer hunting and the big walleye run. Many people ask me what I like more, hunting or fishing? And I always reply, "Ask me in spring I'll say hunting; ask me in the summer I'll say fishing; ask me in the fall and I will usually answer hunting." I'm sure by now you get the pattern.

When I'm not in the woods or by water, you can usually find me on a golf course with my friends or in my room playing guitar."

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### MOERICKE, from page 8

innings later the scoreboard still shows a deuce. The curse is genuine.

So, what to do? Is there a cure? Or, upon catching a fish on the first cast, do you pull up anchor and head back to the landing? When you see a Bullwinkle buck cross the highway, should you crank a U-turn and head for the nearest café? Of course not. You see, I think the fishing/hunting gods can be fooled by indifference. Pretend the fish is no big deal and that you didn't really get a good look at that buck or see its drop tine. Eat a sandwich, have a cold beer. Hide your optimism and the curse may pass you by. Just sayin'. 

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



CAPTAIN LEE HAASCH

# Algoma Is King Of The Kings!

## Lake Michigan's salmon and trout capital

The sun is peaking over the orange horizon. A wisp of clouds makes the morning sky seem like a Terry Redlin print with the fiery sky and calm aqua-blue water. My deck hand, Trevor, is adjusting a port slide diver line and the captain, well, I'm enjoying my first morning cup of coffee. Suddenly, Trevor screams out, "Fish on! Fish on! Slide diver. It's a big one. Look at him go!" Ah, the sounds of spring! It's all music to my ears. I just love early spring fishing. And the most exciting is hearing that drag scream out as a huge King Salmon decides that the opposite direction is where he wants to go.

As if battling a giant King isn't hard enough, Trevor hollers out again, "Fish, fish, fish! Grab that downrigger rod! I got it. Here you go. Who's up?" Now the fun really begins. Two big Kings, lines screaming and an enjoyable kind of chaos begins. Trevor is no longer a rookie, and his command of the back deck shows as he directs the customers to their appropriate spots and we begin to move rods up and out of the way to make room to fight and land the King Salmon. "They're crossing," Trevor shouts. "You move over here and switch sides. Okay, that's good. I'll get the net." Seconds later, Trevor slid the Frabill under a 20-pound King Salmon to the cheers of the anglers aboard.

My nephew sure has gained a good sense for what is go-




*Algoma is known for large catches of Kings and Steelhead and along with that, happy anglers.*

ing on back deck. It reminds me of when I started back in the early '70s. Over the years, I have watched this fishery grow beyond belief. Algoma has always been right in the middle of the rise of the salmon and trout fishery, hosting some of Wisconsin's early rearing ponds to hold the fingerlings a few weeks longer prior to releasing into Lake Michigan. The Algoma area has also held or continues to hold many of the state records for Wisconsin's Lake Michigan salmon and trout species. Additionally, we host one of Wis-


consin's largest and most productive charter fishing fleets.

Algoma has been known as the "Salmon and Trout Capital of the Midwest" and for good reason. For the past 21 years straight, the Algoma area has been the state leader in King Salmon catch numbers. To go along with that, they have also been the state leaders in Steelhead catch for 15 years running! Quite a feat with all the ports up and down the shoreline, but the Algoma area has unique shoreline that transitions from sandy shoreline to the south to rocky structure to the north. This combination lends itself to an ability to hold more baitfish on a consistent basis. And as we all know, if there is food, the predator fish like Kings and Steelhead will come.

Experience for yourself the great fishery Lake Michigan has to offer. And if you want big fish, check out Algoma! For charter information or fishing reports visit my website at fishalgoma.com or call 888-966-3474. From Captain Lee and the crew aboard the Grand Illusion 2, good luck and good fishing! 

*Captain Lee Haasch is a charter captain out of Algoma. Captain Lee has over 40 years of great lakes angling experience and has been instructing anglers for over 30 years with education seminars and timely freelance articles in outdoor publications.*

# ALGOMA!




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CAPTAIN ADAM COCHART

# Picking The Right Spoons

*Match the hatch for coolers full of Lake Michigan salmon and trout*

“Matching the hatch” is a phrase often used in fishing when we attempt to imitate natural bait with artificial imitations in order to fill our coolers with the fish we are after. On Lake Michigan, anglers often try to echo alewife in their lure choices, when fishing salmon and lake trout, and many times have multiple year-classes of the species to choose from. In 2016, I noticed a tremendous amount of 2- to 3-inch alewives, so I selected spoons that were similar in size to the current alewives.

By matching up spoon size to the natural bait that is thriving, anglers have better odds at enticing high-flying steelhead and big king salmon. My go-to spoon for steelhead continues to be Michigan Stinger’s Steelie Stomper on a gold blank. With an overall length of 3 ¾ inches and a nice, thin profile, this spoon has matched up to the most abundant class of alewives for the past five seasons in the waters off Algoma. My first choice for those giant king salmon comes from Moonshine Lures with their



**Matching the hatch lead to these two giant kings for Bay Lake Charters customers.**


standard 4-inch spoon in the RV series Bloody Nose. With its wider profile, bright glow and high visibility throughout the wa-



ter column, I have faith in this spoon when trolling anywhere for salmon or trout.

When my go-to lures are not able trigger

strikes, I start to experiment with smaller spoons like Michigan Stinger’s Scorpions, Dreamweaver Super Slims, and Moonshine Walleye spoons. All of these spoons offer a smaller profile and have saved the day for me more than once. On the other end of the spectrum, when a larger year class of alewives shows up, the salmon and trout key in on adult alewives over 5 inches in length, so I use spoons in magnum sizes.

Pick up a few spoons this summer to match the alewife hatch and you, too, will be filling your coolers in 2017. 

Captain Adam Cochart grew up in Door County, fishing the waters of the bay of Green Bay and Lake Michigan since early childhood. He is on the water nearly every day from May through October, sharing his passion for fishing and knowledge about walleyes on the bay and salmon and trout on the lake. Adam and his wife, Rachael, live in New Franken, Wisconsin, with their avid rabbit hunting Beagle named Trip. For more information visit [baylakescharters.com](http://baylakescharters.com) or call Adam at 920.594.0910.

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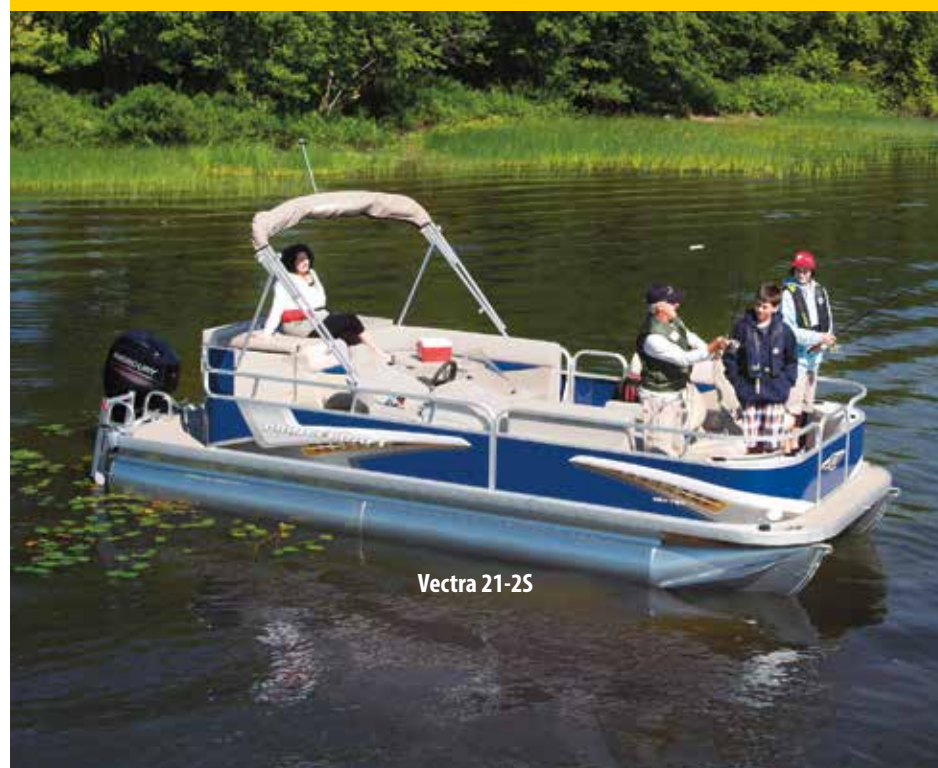
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TOM CARPENTER

# Wild About White Bass

## Here's how (and where) to catch stripers this summer

**W**hite bass hit like freight trains, fight like bulldogs, and make great fillets, but many Wisconsin anglers don't think much about white bass. Maybe it's because wandering white bass are harder to locate after their fabled spring spawning run. But stripers come in great numbers, hit viciously and fight doggedly. And few fishing sights please me more than a pile of handsome silver-flanked, black-striped white bass on ice in a cooler, ready to filet.

### How to Catch Summer Stripers

In rivers, stick to areas with light current. White bass retreat downstream from dams now in a ceaseless search for baitfish. And baitfish are at a premium in summer. Minnows from the year's new hatch are too small to be of interest, and those from last year's hatch are often too big.

Fish deeper water (10 to 20 feet). Try the run below where a tributary enters the river. Fish along deep rip-rap banks on outside bends, vertically jigging as you edge along with the current. Search in eddies created by bends in the river or in the still water behind a point that juts into the main flow. Explore big calm-water pools.

Look for "micro" structure—boulders, downed trees, logjams, anything that breaks the current—and fish there. One of my favorite summertime spots is a scuttled barge sitting in a side channel of the Mississippi. Minnows flock to a 12-foot-deep washout hole on the current-free side and hungry white bass follow.

Summer is also sandbar time. Concentrate on the downstream end, fishing in the calm-water pocket between the currents that flank off to either side. Baitfish gather here and so do white bass. White bass roam far and wide, and occasionally baitfish will pull them up to a dam area in summer. My boys and I catch many Wisconsin River stripers all summer long this way.

In lakes, troll to locate summer fish. Run a couple lines for each fisherman, covering wide swaths and varying depths. White bass can be

anywhere, although a good breakline can attract stripers as they trap schools of baitfish against the sharp structure and slash into them. Whites will often suspend out over the deeper water but at a depth equal to the breakline's top. If the wind is right, drop some lines and drift spinner rigs along a break or structure, checking different depths and probing for fish suspended over deeper water.

Whenever you find fish, anchor up or use your trolling motor to hover near them. Switch from the panfish minnowbaits, small shad crankbaits and spinner rigs you were prospecting with to a jig-and-minnow, jig-and-curlytail, flutter spoon, or slip-bobber rig baited with a minnow.

Watch for seagulls and "boiling" water, indicating a pack of stripers whacking shad or shiners that have been herded to the surface. Ease stealthfully within a cast's distance and toss minnowbaits, jigs or spinners into the melee!

### Where to Find Stripers

White bass love large river systems and their impoundments. To the west, the mighty Mississippi River (especially Lake Pepin) supports a motherlode of white bass, as does the lovely St. Croix, another one of my favorite spots. You'll find white bass along the length of the Wisconsin River, including its big impoundments such as Lake Wisconsin and the Petenwell and Castle Rock flowages.

The Madison chain of lakes produces white bass, especially sprawling Mendota, but you can find whites in all the downstream lakes as well as the Yahara River. Lake Koshkonong is good white bass water, as is the connected Rock River.

To the east, classic white bass waters include the entire Wolf River system and Lakes Winnebago, Butte des Morts and Poygan, as well as the Fox River (at either end of Lake Winnebago) and lower Green Bay itself. [CW](#)

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

TOM CARPENTER

## Badger Birds Bobolink

**A** male bobolink makes a bold and elegant statement as he clings to a tall stalk of grass, swaying back and forth in the breeze and singing his namesake song.

As a citizen of prairies, fields, grasslands, meadows and abandoned pastures, the bobolink does best where part of the landscape escapes mowing, hay-cutting and row-cropping. May and June are prime times to spot these warm-weather Wisconsin songbirds.

Bobolinks thrived over the prairie and savanna portions of Wisconsin before settlement and then expanded as forests were cleared for farming in the central and northern parts of the state. Row cropping and reforestation have since cut back bobolink numbers.

I have enjoyed the beauty of bobolinks from Massachusetts meadows and Nebraska prairies to Wisconsin pastures and fallow fields. Every spring while turkey hunting or trout fishing in southern Wisconsin, I make sure to visit grasslands and prairie remnants to try to spot a bobolink or two. It is one of my favorite songbirds of all time.

**Look** for a "reverse tuxedo," white backside and black underside, to quickly identify a male bobolink. This bold, handsome bird also sports a creamy-yellow patch on the back of the head. Females are indistinct and camouflaged in buff and gray.

**Listen** for the distinctive song from which the bird gets its name: *Bob-o-link bob-o-link bob-o-link*. Feeding birds make nasal *pink* or *enk* calls as they flutter about the grass.



**Marvel** at bobolinks' incredible migratory journey. They winter on the plains of southern South America and nest in grasslands across the northern United States and southern Canada.

**Attract** bobolinks during migration with a little grain such as millet, oats, wheat and shelled sunflower. During summer, bobolinks primarily eat insects. Leave fields and roadsides unmowed until August to help these grass lovers pull off a successful nest.

**Preserve and create** the habitat that bobolinks need: good grass. Unmowed roadsides, fallow fields, forgotten meadows, prairie and savannas all serve as nesting and living ground. Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) grasslands are great for bobolinks and other prairie songbirds. Bobolinks love springtime hay fields, but early mowing destroys their nests. That's why persistent natural grass is so important.

**Did you know** that bobolinks are actually members of the blackbird family? And that in the South they are sometimes known as "rice birds" for their love of that grain? [CW](#)

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





JIM SERVI

# Birding Keeps Gaining Popularity

## Searching for Wisconsin's most unique birds

**B**irding continues to grow in popularity around the United States with an estimated 85 million Americans taking advantage of the well-liked outdoor activity. Interest ranges from keeping a life list of birds and travelling to find new species to those who like to feed wild birds in their yards. Wisconsinites are lucky with over 400 species recorded and an abundance of viewing opportunities in every corner of the state. We also host some very unique birds.

Birding is a natural outdoor hobby for those who hunt, fish and camp throughout Wisconsin, because you are already near the best locations. My interest was sparked by my uncle Mark, who teaches in the Aleutian Islands in Alaska and just notched his 500th bird. Started in 2002, my list of 269 birds, spanning 11 countries and 17 states, has many more adventures to go to match that lofty feat.

For anyone interested in great birding opportunities, Mark says, "I'd mention Wyalusing State Park as a place to visit. I also saw a western tanager and Harris's sparrow at the same time in Gay Mills in Crawford County, along with both cuckoos. Willets and avocets were two rare sightings for me at Wyalusing beach. Thayer's and Iceland gulls in Milwaukee County were biggies for me as well."

Definitely some great places to explore and near the top of my list. To find the most unique Wisconsin birds, it will


take some work, but like anything that requires hard work, the reward is also great.

Standing nearly five feet tall, whooping cranes instantly come to mind as a unique Wisconsin bird. At one time, there were only 15 whooping cranes remaining. Thanks to Operation Migration, a program using ultralight aircraft to help the cranes to their migration grounds in Florida that recently ended, and other volunteers working to maintain the crane population, there are now over 600 cranes, including those in captivity. Still endangered, and one of the rarest birds in the United States, a flock that hovers around 100 lives in Wisconsin each spring and summer before returning to Florida. They make their Wisconsin home where Mark discovered his first whooping crane years ago. "I was able to add the whooping crane at the Necedah Wildlife Refuge," he said, happily recalling the memory as all birders do when asked about a personal discovery.

Kirtland's warblers are another extremely rare bird that can be found in Wisconsin. Placed on the endangered species list in 1967, they were thought to only breed in the northern part of Michigan's Lower Peninsula. Now they nest in the Upper Peninsula, Canada and Wisconsin. From only two successful nesting pairs found in Adams County during monitoring in 2008, the monitoring census has grown to

observations of 30 singing males last spring in Bayfield, Vilas, Marinette and Adams counties. Adams County reached a high of 12 successful nesting pairs in 2015 and is still the best location to find the elusive Kirtland's warbler. Habitat is vital when searching. They generally only live and breed in relatively large, dense stands of jack pines that are 5 to 20 feet tall (6 - 22 years old).

Piping plovers are a small, endangered shorebird that live along the shores of the Great Lakes. Only a handful of breeding pairs have thrived in Wisconsin in recent years, but 2016 saw a big announcement for the piping plover. For the first time in 75 years, piping plovers nested at the newly-restored Cat Island Chain in the Lower Green Bay area. Prior to that, Apostle Islands National Lakeshore was the only regular nesting sites. Several other areas have been established as critical habitat in Marinette, Manitowoc, Douglas and Ashland County to continue that momentum.

All of these locations are great places to begin or continue your birding journey. The great thing about birding is you only need a backyard or local park to begin and Wisconsin has a lifetime of destinations to explore. 

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



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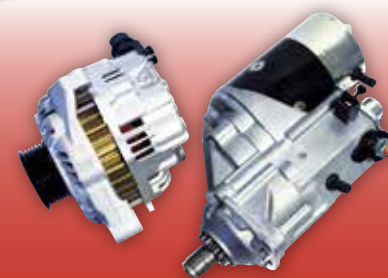
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BEN GRUBER

# KAMO: 10 Years Of Outdoor Mentoring

## Looking back and forging ahead



Recently, the Marsh/Point chapter of Kids and Mentors Outdoors, or KAMO, hosted the tenth annual state KAMO meeting at the Visitors Center at the headquarters of the Mead Wildlife Area in Milladore, Wisconsin. As the newest KAMO chapter, we were excited to show off some of our local facilities and happy to host KAMO leadership from across the state as we gathered for our annual workshop. We shared a potluck lunch and discussed the future of KAMO while taking time to share some pride in ten years of getting kids outdoors.

If you aren't familiar with KAMO, let me tell you a little more. KAMO was started 10 years ago as a means to connect kids with a desire to participate in outdoors activities but who lacked someone to take them. The brainchild of Mark Walters, an outdoors writer from Necedah, KAMO is dedicated to moving our outdoor traditions forward to the next generation. Unlike learn-to-hunt events, KAMO works to have repeated mentoring with the same kid and actually teach them how to do an activity to the point where they become able and confident to do it independently. We perform a background check on all prospective mentors, then match them with a kid in their area with similar interests and turn them loose. We often host group events, using them as a way for mentors and kids/families to meet each other. KAMO




KAMO brothers Sam and Isaac show off their turkeys.

began with just a few people around the state and today has chapters based near Poynette, Marshfield/Stevens Point, Baraboo/Wisconsin Dells, Onalaska, Florence, Ladysmith and Necedah.

We have an annual deer hunt event at the MacKenzie Center near Poynette where around 30 kids spend three days and two nights at camp, hunting and telling stories. Camp is a favorite event of many. I've been canoeing, camping, fishing and shooting with KAMO kids. We've hunted deer, turkeys, squirrels, rabbits and raccoons. I've taught trapping, tracking, skinning and first aid. I've watched kids grow and learn, seen them gain confidence in themselves through discovering the

outdoors. Parents, teachers, guardians and counselors have all praised the work that KAMO is doing. As groups around the country come together to lament the loss of hunters, they often talk about a model of recruitment that is similar to what KAMO does. I hope they are right, and I hope to see more industries support a mentoring model that teaches kids skills instead of introducing them to an activity in which they lack both skills and equipment to be able to participate.

I gave six years to KAMO leadership and as of March stepped down from my position as Vice President. I'm looking forward to growing my own chapter and spending more time mentoring again. In the last six years, I had some neat accomplishments, saw growth of KAMO and had some misses, too. I learned a lot, got invited to some national gatherings of big-timers in the hunting and fishing industries to talk about KAMO, and even dipped my toes into politics a little bit. Now it's time to get back to spending time with kids, especially my own. I'm still happy to talk KAMO anytime, and we are always in need of mentors and donors. Get ahold of me at [bwgruber@gmail.com](mailto:bwgruber@gmail.com) and I will point you in the right direction. 

Ben Gruber is the President of the Marsh/Point Chapter of KAMO and was the State VP for six years. You can learn more about KAMO at [kamokids.org](http://kamokids.org) or find them on Facebook.

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**SUZETTE CURTIS**

## Recipes By Suzette

### Nut-crusted fish

When preparing fish at our home, my husband and I have a regular discussion about whether we should coat the fish in some way, or, as he says, “cook it naked.” (I’m never really sure if he’s talking about the fish or the cook, but that’s an entirely different story.) Fresh fish with just a bit of butter, salt and pepper is still our favorite, but sometimes it’s fun to try a new twist. These nut-crusted fish recipes are a delicious change of pace. Enjoy!

#### Almond Crusted Walleye

- |                                       |                                       |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| ½ cup milk                            | Safflower oil                         |
| ½ cup toasted almonds, finely chopped | Walleye fillets (1 ½ to 2 lbs. total) |
| ½ cup panko breadcrumbs               | Salt & pepper                         |

½ tsp. tarragon

Pour milk into shallow bowl.

Combine breadcrumbs, almonds and tarragon in large, shallow dish.

Add enough safflower oil to large skillet to have about ¼-inch depth. Heat over medium-high heat.

Wash walleye fillets and pat dry; sprinkle both sides with salt and pepper. Dip fillets into milk and then dredge through breadcrumb mixture, pressing coating into the fish.

Cook fish for 3 to 5 minutes on first side; turn once and continue cooking until crust is golden brown and fish is cooked through.

This is especially good served right on top of creamy coleslaw.

#### Pecan Crusted Whitefish

- |                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| 2/3 cup whole pecans | Canola oil                               |
| ½ T smoked paprika   | Whitefish fillets (about 1 ½ lbs. total) |
| 2 tsp. chili powder  | Mayonnaise                               |
| 2 tsp. brown sugar   |  |

Pulse pecans in food processor until roughly ground. Combine pecans and spices in shallow dish.

Heat enough oil to just cover bottom of large pan on medium-high setting.

Spread mayonnaise liberally onto all sides of fish fillets; dredge through pecan mixture, pressing coating into fish. Cook whitefish for 3 to 5 minutes on one side and then flip carefully. Continue to cook fish another 3 to 5 minutes until cooked through.

#### Walnut Crusted Catfish


- |   |                                      |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| 2/3 cup toasted walnuts, finely chopped | 1 egg                                |
| 1/3 cup flour                           | Catfish fillets (about 2 lbs. total) |
| 1 T dried basil                         | Salt & pepper                        |
| 1 T dried parsley                       | Olive oil                            |
| ½ T chives                              |                                      |

Preheat oven to 450°. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

Beat egg slightly in shallow bowl.

Combine walnuts, flour, basil, parsley and chives in shallow plate.

Dip fish into egg bowl, sprinkle with salt and pepper, and place on prepared baking sheet. Spoon walnut mixture on top of each fillet, pressing firmly into fish. Lightly drizzle olive oil over all.

Bake fish until just cooked through, about 8 to 10 minutes. If desired, place the fish under the broiler for an additional 1 to 2 minutes to brown the crust. 

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

#### Lily River Foods Cajun Walleye

Two 6- to 8-oz. walleye fillets  
¾ cup predip (If you don’t have a predip mix, use 2 eggs with ¼ cup milk.)

1 cup cold water

Lily Rivers’ Cajun Breeding

Mix ¾ cup predip with 1 cup cold water in a bowl. (If you don’t have a predip mix, use 2 eggs with ¼ cup milk.) Stir thoroughly. Coat fillet with predip or egg/milk mix. Then dip fillet in a bowl of Lily River Cajun Breeding. Evenly coat. Fry fillet at 350 degrees for approximately 3-4 minutes. Remove from fryer and drain on paper towel to remove excess oil. Allow to cool and serve with your favorite sides!

#### Bonnie’s Favorite Tartar Sauce

A favorite version of tartar sauce that Lily River Foods uses for our own Fish Fries.

- 1 cup Hellmann’s Mayonnaise
- 1/3 cup dill relish
- 1/4 cup dried onion flakes
- 1 tsp. yellow mustard
- 1/2 tsp. lemon juice
- black pepper (to taste)
- garlic salt (to taste)

Combine all ingredients and refrigerate 30 minutes prior to serving. Serves approximately 8-10.

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The marina is open, and some charter captains have already been out fishing. Kayaks and paddleboards are being launched from our South Beach, and there have even been some surfers out! The season is heating up and we hope to see you soon. Visit our website and make your plans to come to Port. **Ozaukee County.**

Visit Ashland during these great early summer events: Chequamegon Bay Birding & Nature Festival at the

Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center, Ashland, May 18-20; House-to-House Garage Sale in Ashland, May 20; Apostle Islands Inline Marathon on beautiful Madeline Island, June 17; Superior Vistas Bike Tour at Thompson’s West End Park, Washburn, June 24. **Ashland County.**

Fun time in Ferryville on the Mississippi River. Use the Ferryville Boat Launch (Pool 9) to access the best fishing on the river. Opening day is May 6! Open all year and the docks go in as soon as spring river stage allows. May 13: Spring Bird Migration Hike, 8 a.m., Sugar Creek Bluff. May 19 & 20: “Rummage Along the River,” 70 Mile Garage Sale. Spring is here. **Crawford County.**

Spring has sprung and the trails are ready. Sparta, the “Bicycling Capital of America,” is awesome this time of year. Motorcycling, horseback riding, kayaking, hunting, fishing and, of course, biking. Sparta—a choice destination in Western Wisconsin. See you soon. **Monroe County.** 



JERRY DAVIS

# Meeting More Morels

## Weather will tell you when to begin

It would be easier if there were a set season for morel gathering, but the weather determines when to grab a poking stick and carry bag. Where to begin searching for this mushroom is mostly determined by locating the best dead host trees. These locations change year to year, so don't rely entirely on last year's successes and failures.

Morel season starts with scouting. As soon as the snow melts, likely morel-producing trees can be identified and permission acquired, if necessary. Some who gather this fungus are always looking for likely elms, and a few others species, that are clues as to where to begin searching.

Morel mushroom gathering basically comes down to finding a white (American) elm that has been dead about a year or two. It seems even a single live branch is a deal breaker. An elm standing with just a few large limbs remaining is like Leroy Van Dyke's popular song, "Walk On By." Take the song's advice; just walk on by.

Successful morel mushroom gatherers are

known by these traits: start early, go often, walk up hill as well as down. Look from different angles. Generally, avoid red (slippery) elms. Some have mother lodes, but most have zippo. If there is a dead red where you are searching, check it out but otherwise, stick to the white tree.

Mycologists and novice fungal fanatics have a name for those perfect whites: sliders. These are trees with the bark sliding off but not all the way off and certainly not "smoothies," with no bark at all. They are too far gone, too old. Once in a while a single morel will be there, but it's rarely worth the walk to get it.

This advice has been for someone who really wants to fill a bag in a hurry. But morel gathering can be entirely different for the patient pathfinder, the man or woman who likes to explore to get morels, and also to get an education. They may even get side-tracked and find themselves picking leeks, pheasant tail bracket fungi, stopping to examine a rare trillium or some slow-moving

animal life.

These folks are morel hunters, too, but they want, accept, value the total experience and they don't need much direction. They may be as fulfilled coming home with eight black morels as they are with 200 light tan ones. For those individuals, here are some unusual finds that will encourage them to keep doing what they set out to do.


Purely by serendipity, I found a location near a living white oak tree that has a half dozen dark morels each year, sometimes early, sometimes late in the season. Just once I found 30 morels on an old prairie hundreds of yards from the nearest tree or shrub, stump or log.

Sometimes morels defy logic and mycology and grow among the garlic mustard herbs. One morel growing in such a location grew through holes in a shagbark hickory seed, and as it enlarged, it was strangled. Yet a different time I spent 30 minutes photographing a daytime barred owl only to realize I was standing on morels. I've picked

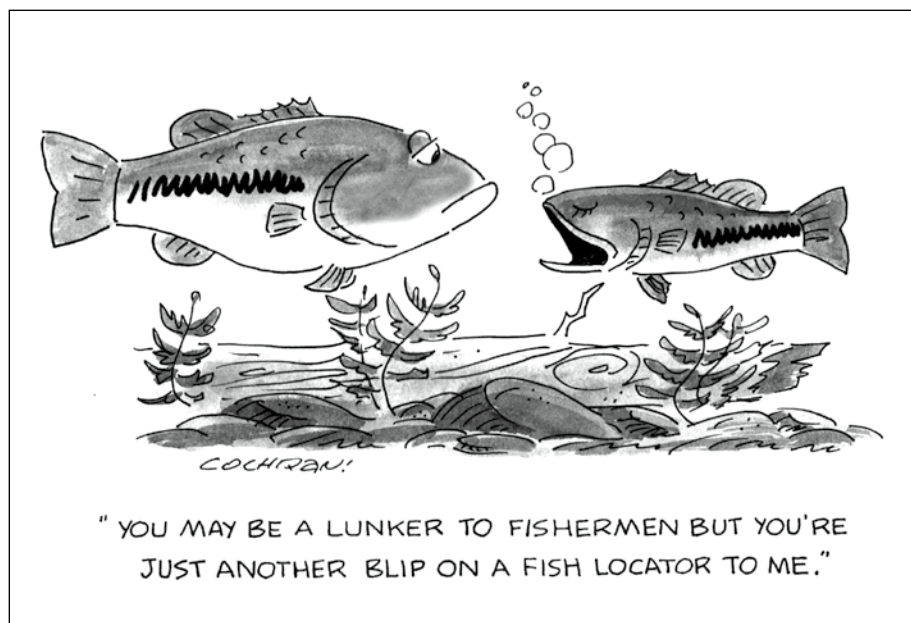


*An unusual find can make an outing fulfilling.*

there several times since, but it's never been the same, even though the morels are usually there.

We all judge a successful outdoors outing differently. 

*Jerry Davis, a Wisconsin native, retired from university teaching and now lives in rural Iowa County. He applies arts and sciences to writing and enjoying Wisconsin's outdoors. Contact him at [sivadjam@mhtc.net](mailto:sivadjam@mhtc.net).*



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Customer Rating  
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LOW PROFILE  
HEAVY DUTY STEEL  
FLOOR JACK  
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Weights  
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OILLESS  
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• Weighs 120 lbs.

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10 FT. x 20 FT.  
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69034/62858 shown

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62409/62698  
30900 shown

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12" SLIDING COMPOUND  
DOUBLE-BEVEL MITER SAW  
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★★★★★

**\$134.99**

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## HaulMaster SUPER COUPON



1000 lb. capacity

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61899/62399/63095/63096  
63098/63097

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7000 RUNNING WATTS  
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CALIFORNIA ONLY

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**\$529.99**

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61917 shown

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69955  
42292 shown

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18 VOLT CORDLESS  
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## SUPER COUPON



SOLAR  
ROPE LIGHT  
ITEM 62533  
68353 shown

Customer Rating  
★★★★★

**\$9.99**

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## VOYAGER SUPER COUPON



12" TOOL BAG  
ITEM 62163/62349  
61467 shown

Customer Rating  
★★★★★

**\$4.99**

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## PORTLAND SUPER COUPON



1.5 HP, 7 AMP MOTOR  
ELECTRIC POLE SAW  
ITEM 68862/63190  
62896 shown

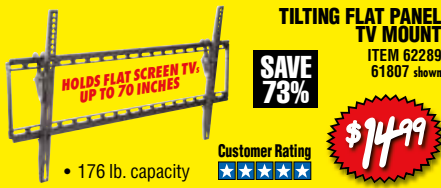
Customer Rating  
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## SUPER COUPON



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TV MOUNT  
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61807 shown

Customer Rating  
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**\$14.99**

Compare \$55.82

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## drillmaster SUPER COUPON



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POLISHER/SANDER  
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Customer Rating  
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**LEE GATZKE**

# NextBuk Outdoors

## *Deer hunting in the rain*

A few years back my friend Jarrod and I planned a hunting trip around his busy schedule. What we hadn't planned was Mother Nature dealing us a hand of *deer hunting in the rain*. When it's springtime and you're making plans for a November hunt, you have no idea what the weather will hold in store. Naturally, we would have preferred cool, dry, calm conditions for this hunt, even though past experience had shown that deer don't go into hibernation because of a steady rain. When you're dealing with a thunderstorm or a heavy downpour, deer tend to "hole up." So, our thinking is, if it's raining lightly or moderately, hunt. If it's a downpour, scout.

Scouting during your hunt in a downpour is a Godsend, because you are able to verify how the deer are currently using the area and your scent is quickly washed away by the rain. If you don't bump deer out of their bedding areas while doing this, they'll never know you were there since they were hunkered down waiting out the storm.

Light and moderate rains somewhat compromise a deer's sense of smell, hearing and sight. Any reduction in a deer's ability to use its senses to the fullest is an advantage for a hunter. It helps us remain undetected while

on stand or traveling to or from our stands, increasing chances of success. Another plus about deer hunting in the rain is that the majority of other hunters stay out of the woods. If you hunt public land, this is especially helpful because you have the woods and swamps to yourself.

I buy the best quality rain gear I can afford since it does a better job of keeping me dry and comfortable on rainy day hunts, which in turn keeps me in a good frame of

*continued on page 27*



*Hunting during the rain produced a double for this duo.*



*Unless a rain is a downpour, deer go about their normal activities just as they would on a dry, cloudless day.*

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

### CRAZY CREEK COMFORT CHAIR

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

### IRISH SETTER 2870 VAPRTREK WATERPROOF BOOTS

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

### MEPPS MUSKY FLASHABOU

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

### LIVE TARGET SWIMBAIT SERIES

Newly designed, the level of innovation in these lures is impressive. Seven freshwater species from yellow perch to gizzard shad are designed to replicate the movement of that particular species with precise internal weight systems and customized tails. Extremely detailed coloring. Dorsal fins are positioned to act as a weed guard. The realism is unbelievable. This lure is a solid addition to any tackle box. (\$9.99-\$18.99)

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

### SIBERIAN COOLER'S ALPHA SERIES

Started only recently, this company is dedicated to creating coolers that meet the needs of outdoorsmen. It looks like they accomplished that with this series. Cooler walls are made with up to 2.75 inches of insulation to keep your food and beverages chilled or preserve your hard-earned game. Latches were carefully designed with anodized aluminum to withstand harsh environments, yet open and close with ease. Four sizes: 22, 45, 65, and 85 quarts. Lifetime warranty. (\$159.99-\$349.99)

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


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

?????, from page 26

mind while dealing with the elements.

Knowing how rain affects the flight of an arrow or bullet is another key part of how rain impacts our deer hunt. Practice in rainy conditions to understand the limitations.

An important consideration at any time, but especially if you'll be hunting in the rain, is the ability to track a wounded deer. In Wisconsin, it is legal to use a blood-tracking dog to recover wounded game as long as it's done lawfully. There are dog handlers who provide this service and operate in accordance with the laws. You can locate such dog handlers by visiting [www.unitedbloodtrackers.org](http://www.unitedbloodtrackers.org). These dogs can follow the scent and recover a deer whose trail has gone cold to a human once the visible blood has disappeared. It's important to our sport to support this service.

Jarrold and I endured a cold, wet afternoon on stand. An hour before dark, a rain-soaked buck offered me an 8-yard shot. My arrow passed through him and he ran over a nearby ridge. Half an hour later back at my truck, I called a blood-tracking dog handler. By the time the dog got on the washed-out blood trail I was worried, but the dog had picked up the residual scent and found the buck within minutes. The buck Jarrold shot that same evening tipped over within 30 yards and we were celebrating that night. This and other rainy day hunts prove that it's very possible to be successful hunting in the rain. 

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.



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FRED SCHAFFHAUSER

# The Archer's Bullets

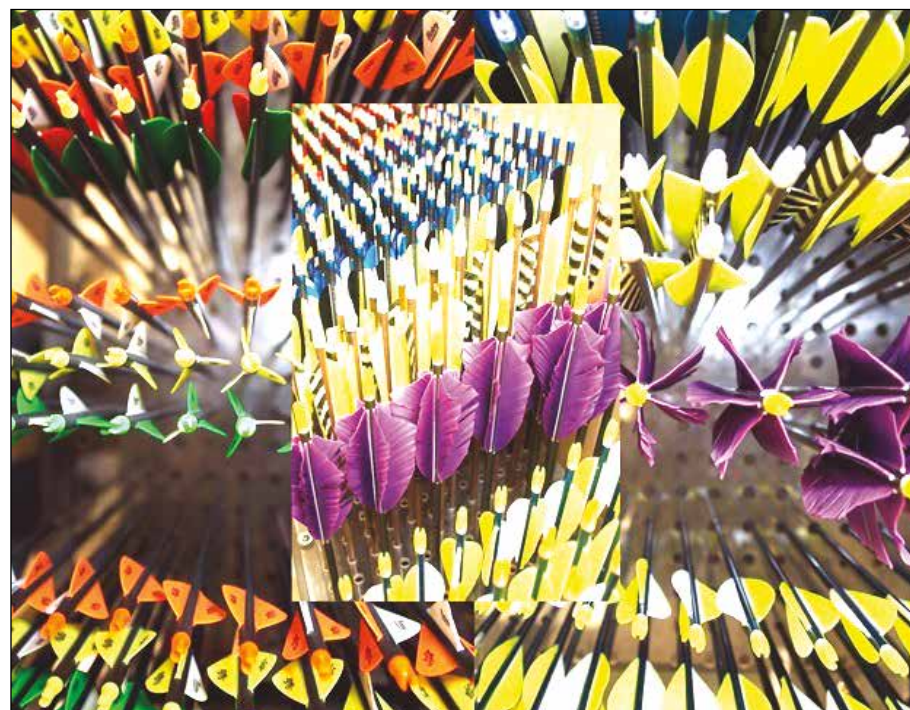
## Shoot a perfectly matched set of arrows for success

I'm no expert on guns, but even I know you probably won't hit or group the same with non-matching ammunition. This is also true of arrows. It's not even possible with a gun to use the wrong caliber shell. They generally don't fit and if you force it, you're in for an expensive trip to the gunsmith. With archery equipment, there is nothing physically stopping you from shooting an arrow with the wrong prescription for your bow. On a daily basis, I see customers bring in their setups in a case filled with improperly fitted or mismatched arrows.

Arrows first and foremost need to be fitted to the bow and archer. Let's talk a little about sizing the correct arrow. At the root of it all an arrow needs to have the proper stiffness to leave the bow with the front and back ends of the arrow in line (not kicking left or right or porpoising as they fly down range). The prescription of the correct arrow for your setup will depend on the bow's pull weight, the cut length

of the arrow, the tip weight and, lastly, the shooting style of the archer (i.e., releasing the string with fingers vs. with a mechanical release aide). All of these things determine what the prescription of the arrow needs to be. For the most part, any arrow manufacturer's chart will give you the proper size shaft to use once all of the variables are considered. Seems a bit complicated? It is. That's why it's important to get arrows fitted at your local bow shop. Bow and broadhead tuning becomes much easier once a properly-spined arrow is used.

Once an arrow prescription or size is determined, we need to consider the other arrow attributes. Should you use natural feathers or plastic vanes? Should they be short or long? Should the fletching have a rate of twist to spin the arrow in flight or be glued on straight? What tip weight should I use? Will my regular nocks shoot the same as my lit nocks? These are all important questions, and each of these variables will make an arrow shoot differently.



*From hunting to target, traditional to modern, there is an arrow for every purpose.*

Modern high-end compound bows with mechanical drop style rests allow archers to use most any style of fletching. Since these rests allow the arrow to leave the bow untouched, these bow setups use arrows with a stiff, short plastic fletch. This style of fletching is not affected by wet weather and generally stays in better condition than natural feathers. It's most often used with carbon arrows.

Natural feathers are a must when steering larger diameter, heavier aluminum shafts. Feathers are also best when there is a chance that the fletching might come in contact with the arrow rest while leaving the bow. Feathers will compress when hitting a rest or bowshelf component while leaving the bow without deflecting the arrow shaft, making them perfect for traditional archers with non-mechanical rests.

Feather or plastic vanes can be put on with a helical (twist) or straight. It is generally accepted that an arrow tipped with a non-expandable broadhead might do best if the fletching twists the arrow in flight to take away any path the broadhead may want to take on its own. Expandable-style

broadheads often do fine with straight fletched arrows.

Using a bunch of mismatched arrows is a bad idea ... always! Every variable matters. I often hear the excuse, "Oh, I just use these for practice." I can't think of a situation where we would practice with something that we aren't going to use for hunting and expect that will be a good thing. Another excuse, "I just use these for small game while I'm deer hunting." Taking small game is hard enough with your best arrows. Shooting an arrow that shoots different at a small target will only frustrate you.

I know it's difficult to let go of stuff. I have a garage full of things I can't let go of, but those two "practice" arrows you have mixed in with your matched set are not doing you any favors. *WO*

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

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GARY GREENE

# Memories From An Old Hunter

## Sounds of the hunt

During one of our recent record-breaking 65-degree February days, I was outside relaxing, writing and enjoying the many voices from our lake. I heard calls from numerous Canada geese, pairs of Sandhill cranes, a few scattered mallards and the wings of some unidentified diving ducks. As I was thinking of those sounds of the wild, I wondered, during my 66 years, just how many different sounds have I heard? Then I came back to Earth, realizing that sounds are infinite; however, during one's lifetime there are specific sounds that are special and remembered for specific reasons. I prefer to think of a few of my favorites as sounds of the hunt.

Because of the hunt anticipation, I am awakened by the music from my alarm just minutes after I fall asleep. I stagger down the steps while ricocheting between the walls and railing. The aroma of brewing coffee begins to fill the kitchen. As I drink my coffee, I make that sipping noise that really annoys my wife, Chris, but she's still sleeping so I sip away. I hear my son, Nate, arriving for our hunt. Few words are exchanged and I make my personal morning old man noises as we dress and load our gear.

Carrying too much equipment as we make our way


down to the lake, my breathing is labored as I shuffle my feet on the gravel trail. With our head lamps on, our hunting accessories clatter as they are tossed into the aluminum duck skiff. Once on the lake, the only sound is that harmless wake of water trailing our boat and the electric trolling motor. As we approach our blind, the odors of the marsh awaken our senses. The crashing of our boat ends the silence as we break the shoreline's thin layer of ice. That disruption rouses the marsh as alarmed geese take to the air with splashes, honks and beating wings.

With thoughts of species and wind direction, the decoys make splashes and ripples as Nate strategically tosses each deke. The pre-cut cattails quietly brush together as they are passed from father to son as we cover and camouflage the skiff. My dog, Nyjer, splashes around the blind with nervous energy. I am nearly positive that I can hear him planning his attack for the upcoming retrieves. Our eyes are talking as men and dog look at each other when ducks begin to circle our decoys. After many years of practice, Nate works his call. Our shots shatter the still, almost absolute silence of the frozen morning. Nyjer is whining with anticipation before lunging into the blue. After each duck, he is verbally praised. In the blind, to



Nate and Gary Greene after a successful hunt on the lake.

shed excess water, Nyjer is vigorously shaking, resulting in it appearing that we, too, made the retrieves. Then the joy of our replaying the shots and hoping it will all occur again. Those sounds are so greatly rewarding, it is as if I paid for them as one would do for a live concert featuring the Rolling Stones or the Grateful Dead.

Back at the house, to capture the memories, Chris directs us to our positions as she snaps pictures of the ducks, guns, dog, and father and son. 

Gary Greene is a lifelong bird hunter and for years has been a pheasant hunting guide. He also writes a weekly column for the OWO website. Gary, his veterinarian wife, Chris, and their five labs live in East Troy. You can contact Gary at [ganggreene2002@yahoo.com](mailto:ganggreene2002@yahoo.com).

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CHRIS REHLINGER

## Novice Bear Hunt, Part II

### Bait, bait and more bait

Bait stations located and bait cribs constructed. What's next? Bait! First, I made a list of potential suppliers of two-day old bakery items that normally go into the store's dumpsters. The list includes local grocery stores, gas stations and sandwich shops. After talking to six possible suppliers, I was able to get one good source of both breads and sweets twice each week. While talking with bakery staff from one of the denials, I was provided with some good bait information. They told me to make sure to dry all of the items if I was going to build a cache of bait. Mold may take a quick toll on all of your bait and render it useless or less desirable. So, the twice-a-week ritual began of cutting all of the bread pieces, like buns, in half and letting them start drying in the garage. Before drying anything, I purchased six 32-gallon trash cans with lids to store my cache of bait for the hunt.

I also did this with donuts and pies. Once everything is cut into small portions the drying process starts to make bear bait croutons!

Either the donuts go onto a large cooking sheet, or bread pieces are set on the rack in the oven. I set the oven for 175 degrees and bake for 60 minutes. After that, I turn the oven off, crack the door and let everything cool down for a few hours. Once cool, I place in a 5-gallon bucket and let sit in the garage overnight. After one week, my wife despises the constant use of the oven and the crumbs that linger.

Another method for the pastries with cream fillings, or anything with syrup or heavy frosting, is to place them on the largest pieces of flat bread available and bake them on this surface. The donut dries and the frosting is absorbed by the bread.

A great fill item for this type of bait that is already dry is popcorn. You want popcorn that is dry—not wet or oily. To produce quantities of my own fresh popcorn, I am off to the thrift store to find a vintage air popcorn popper. The second store I visited yielded a mint popper for a mere six dollars. Then I bought raw kernels in 2-to 4-pound bags at a low cost. My sons like the popcorn



Prepping and unpackaging the bags of bread and pastries.

production and snitch from the bucket like picking strawberries or blueberries.

Now that I have supplies for baits, I layer the trash cans first with popcorn then dry bakery and keep continuing the layers. Another benefit of drying all of the material is less weight carried into the woods.


*continued on page 33*

BOB SPIERINGS

## Bear Baiting 101!

Now that you have your “secret” bear bait locations, it's time to let the bears know you've arrived with the goods! The best way to inform bears that you have bait in the area is to douse the bait site with a strong, concentrated scent. A great way to do this is by pulling the top of a small sapling over and tying a rag, saturated with a strong scent, to the top of the tree. Then release the sapling back into its upright position. By doing this the wind will take the scent further, attracting more bears to your area. Additionally, apply scents on the ground and anywhere a bear may place its paws. This way, when the bear leaves the bait site, they will leave a scented trail leading other bears right to your bait. Not only are concentrated scents great for attracting bears, they also work as a cover scent during hunting season, but remember to never apply it to yourself!


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**Friends of OWO Bear Expert Mike Foss would like to donate a bear tag to a wounded veteran. For information, contact Foss at 715-292-5422.**

OUTDOOR  
UPDATE

### MIKE FOSS

Not long after my story “Bear Guides Question Evidence At Wolf Kill Sites: Are declining deer numbers, increasing wolf population making young bears prey to northern Wisconsin packs?” in the March/April 2017 edition of OWO, this photo found its way to me. Dated 4/2/2017, it was taken from a trail camera in Douglas County near the town of Dairyland, just north of Danbury. Ironically, the evidence of my story is told with just one captured picture of a wolf and the yearling bear that has fallen prey to it. 



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**TOM MUELLER**

# Pick Of The Litter ... Continued

## *Not such a tough decision*


My last article ended with my experiences picking the first three retriever pups out of the nine that I've owned and trained. Two of the three were handed to me because they were the last ones to be sold. They turned out pretty darn good considering my lack of training experience and knowledge. The one that I actually did pick, Sassy, ended up being not the hunting dog I had hoped for. Sassy was the first dog that I entered in a hunt test. Watching her performance and that of the other dogs entered, that was her first and last test. I could readily see she was not a dog for this kind of game, much less hunting.

My third pup, Mona, came from much better breeding and was a more suitable candidate for this sport. She taught me quickly, though, that I was lacking in retriever training knowledge and needed help if I was going to have success. Having picked her from a good breeder with a solid reputation, I went back there for advice. The breeder guided me through and became somewhat of a mentor. Having finally titled Mona at Senior Hunter, I now had my non-slip hunting retriever that I always dreamed about and had been bitten by the hunt test bug. Was I a superbly accomplished trainer after one dog? Certainly not, but I had developed a deep passion for the sport of training retrievers for hunting and hunt tests.

Soon, I was after pup number four. Opting to go with another female, I went back to my favorite breeder and had the opportunity to pick from several. I chose Molly from the females of the litter that the breeder had available. She let them all loose in her yard and I watched 'em go, Molly at the front no matter which way they turned. She was a high speed little red ball of fur and fire power! Too good to pass up! I

was now on my way starting to train my next retriever. Molly's training and success at hunt tests went well. She became titled at Senior Hunter, which again met my needs for a solid hunting retriever. Having been a member of the Fox Valley Retriever Club since my third dog, Mona, and attending their regularly-scheduled training sessions made me a better and more knowledgeable trainer and things came easier with her. In addition to that, my favorite breeder sold me a very biddable, eager to please and exceptionally fast retriever in Molly.

A few years after getting Molly, I heard about a litter that was available. This litter was out of a female from my favorite breeder and out of a male that had developed a reputation for repeatedly doing a very handsome job of qualifying at the Master in hunt tests. My thinking in pursuing a pup from this breeding was that I was going to have the best of both worlds. Cassy was one of three females to choose from. I had a very hard time trying to decide which one. I wanted the best of the three. Not sure which one that would be, I just picked one. She also became a top-notch hunting dog not only because of her breeding but also because I was a more experienced and accomplished trainer, had been training her to run hunt tests, and was regularly training with the Fox Valley Retriever Club.

Next came Maggie, another pup from my favorite breeder. To be continued.... 

*Tom has been avidly training retrievers since the early 1980s. His passion has evolved into helping others achieve the satisfaction that he has had. For questions regarding retriever training contact Tom at winddancer.rtrvrs@hotmail.com. For information about the Fox Valley Retriever Club go to foxvalleyretrieverclub.com.*

*A good pick trained well, watching the action!*



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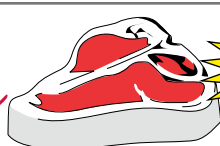
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**SKYE GOODE**

## Textbook Turkey Hunting

### A typical spring season

My mother started me on trapping and hunting, but she wasn't a turkey hunter. Not too many years ago, my cousin Adam said he would take me out on a spring turkey hunt, so I jumped at the opportunity. Growing up, we lived on a farm and raised dozens of domestic bronze turkeys. I spent many hours outside in the yard playing with strutting toms that I considered my pets. So, thinking about turkey hunting, I thought, "How boring that must be to shoot a farm animal." After my first turkey hunt, I realized I was wrong! As Adam called in a group of jakes that were strutting and thundering across the field, I couldn't help but pull the trigger on the first one that gave me a shot. From there on out, I was hooked.

For spring turkey hunting, I strictly use a shotgun. Over the past few years, shooting turkeys with archery equipment has been the biggest trend. While I thoroughly enjoy shooting my bow, I simply cannot pass up the opportunity to hear the bang from the shotgun and watch that turkey flop to the

ground instantly. I also take every opportunity to harvest porcupines and coyotes if I see them during my hunt, therefore, I shoot an old Remington pump shotgun and use the new Winchester Longbeard XR turkey loads. Sometimes I hunt in a blind if I bring my son with me or if I'm hunting and using video recording equipment. If not, I'll usually "run and gun," which means hunting by foot, doing a pattern of sitting down and calling, listening for birds that are close, then moving on a few hundred yards and repeating the process until something answers back.

A sucker for turkey decoys, friends often make fun of my decoy spread, as I like to use as many as I can carry. I usually put out at each set three to five hens in various positions, including breeding and/or feeding, a jake fan, a standing jake on a spring pole, and a big strutting tom with a real tail fan. Mostly superstition, but I firmly believe that turkeys will be much less on alert for danger if there is a nice big "flock" in the field when calling them in.



*A mature public land gobbler harvested by the author on a hunt with her cousin Adam.*

When hunting in the spring, I use a variety of turkey calls. I am not a huge fan of box calls, as they are cumbersome and bulky. I run a sequence of a mouth call in combination with a slate/pot call. This gives the effect of two turkeys chattering away, which compliments my huge decoy spread nicely. I'll do everything from yelps to purrs to clucks in all sorts of different sequences. I learned from a dear turkey hunter friend that the best way to call in turkeys is to sound like a "drunk with a party horn," and that has stuck with me over the years. I don't believe that you can call too much or too often when it comes to turkeys.

I hunt a variety of landscapes, from public swamp land to private farm land. There are a few spots that farmers and land-owners graciously allow me to hunt year after year. The habits of turkeys vary from month to month, so even if you watched a huge flock all winter or see a group of birds a month before the season opens, that doesn't mean they will be there a few weeks later, so pre-season scouting for me usually means just a few days before the season starts.

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



*Skye and her first true limb hanger.*

**REHLINGER, from page 31**

The last thing needed for the "great bait debate" is transport to the field. One idea I heard was to buy 10-gallon rubber tubs with covers because they can be used for storage after the hunt. Good idea but I thought a little clumsy and bulky. Where do good ideas become great? Good ideas come to me at the double F store in the army surplus area. My first thought was a large army duffle bag, but something even better appeared: an interior rubber-coated nylon laundry bag for less than seven dollars each. I brought one bag home and dumped ten gallons of popcorn in it to measure space, having plenty of room. Two more laundry bags were purchased, having enough for truck and field transport.

Here's to better bait baking, popping and field transport. 

*Wisconsinite Chris Rehlinger is a native of Neosho but has called Lake Wisconsin home for the last 18 years with his wife, Lori, and sons Maxwell and Lucas. He works in the engineering/construction management field but always has something regarding fishing or hunting on his mind.*



*Drying everything to prevent mold.*



*Popping popcorn as a bait filler!*



TOM CARPENTER

## Cubs Corner

### Turkey blind secrets

The best way to get any kid a May gobbler is to wait in a blind. But there's more to the game than meets the eye. Some turkey hunters think blinds are for kids. Well, they are! A blind is the perfect place to plunk down, hide a fidgety young hunter and fool a smart, old tom.

At first blush, blind hunting seems simple. But like any turkey hunting approach, you can only find success by paying attention to the details.

**Pick a route.** Roost areas can be hit or miss or the birds might walk the other way. Instead, scout hard and set up your blind along an established turkey travel route between roost areas and feeding spots.

**Watch the food.** Alternatively, wait right where the hens feed: a fallow meadow, a hay or clover field, corn stalks or other grain stubble, or a hardwood ridge where acorns still hide under the leaves. Gobblers will follow the hens to your ambush.

**Find the stage.** Another option: hunt where turkeys like to end up after their ear-

ly-morning breeding and feeding sessions, their strut zone.

**Set up smart.** Use terrain and vegetation to help hide your blind. Nestle it against a hillside. Nuzzle it up to a copse of trees or into a thicket of shrubs. Let some branches hang over. Prop native vegetation (grass, cornstalks, reeds, branches) alongside. Brush it in.

**Rake it clean.** Use a small garden rake to clean away leaves and other crunchies from the ground inside your blind so you and your trainee can shift your feet in silence when needed.

**Avoid silhouettes.** Close the blind's back windows completely. Draw side windows down to a mere slit for peeking. Leave as little of the front windows open as possible. Sit far back in the blind. The goal: minimize or eliminate the chance of silhouetting yourselves.

**Wear full camouflage.** Always wear camouflage in a turkey blind. This means a facemask and gloves also. Black clothing is



Good positioning, smart techniques and lots of quality time helped the author's son, Ethan, take this Iowa County gobbler from a blind.

another good choice.

**Minimize noise.** Just as a blind doesn't make you invisible, it's not soundproof. Be careful with noise. The nice thing is, as with movement, you don't have to be perfectly perfect.

**Try decoys.** Place a couple hen decoys within 10 or 15 yards of your blind to give incoming turkeys confidence in the area. Jake decoys can be effective, too, because

they incite a gobbler's competitive nature.

**Pursue comfort.** Prepare for the long haul with a good seat, decent food for both of you and plenty to drink. This will prolong the wait, which is good.

**Rehearse the shot.** Take stock of all potential turkey approaches. Have the young hunter swing and aim at imaginary turkeys. Imagine scenarios and practice your in-the-

*continued on page 39*



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DICK ELLIS

## Late Bird

### Keys to success ... or failure

A man just has got to know his limitations.

When one of our *On Wisconsin Outdoors'* fishing experts takes this publisher on the water, for example, I might say, "What's that?"

"That's a fish."

"Oh, that's what they look like."

God gives us all gifts. Some of us can naturally catch fish. Some have to write about the ones that can naturally catch fish.

I can't fish. Some of our OWO experts can't write. They write and spell, in fact, worse than my Golden Retriever, Micah. When one of my hunting guide-friends, in fact, found out we needed his field expertise on these pages of OWO, because he is a great guide, he fired off an e-mail to his wife, "Huney, I are a riter now two!"

Sorry boys, does this mean no more invites to the boat? Besides, I have to listen to your comments like, "Ellis don't come up here... you'll shut off this great walleye bite..."

A man has also got to know what he's good at. I can bring Tom to the kill with a mouth call. It's a real kick to verbally take a gobbler away from a boss hen, or to walk out of the late season woods with a 26 pound bird on your back after an all-day duel and your arms and face are so ripped up from thorns that your neighbor thinks you were golfing again.

Although I could fill pages with past lessons learned from my own mistakes, here are a few calling suggestions. I hope they help.

■ Don't be afraid to call the long bird. Be aggressive and loud. He will come a very long way for his payoff. My hunting partner has told me that I had riled up a distant bird that I could not hear personally until his gobbling approach had closed the distance. My partner killed it over his decoy 15 minutes later.

■ When the bird you did rile up finally stops gobbling, get off the talk too. He's coming. He doesn't want to announce his

location, and he's looking for you.

■ Make sure that even though your verbal battle may seem to last forever, all movement by you is done prior to his grand entrance. That mistake cost me a big Tom that had come a very long way over one hour. He is already trained on your general position trying to find the hen and his vision is not going to miss even a slowly sliding boot. Deal with your sleeping foot before he gets there.

■ Learn how to imitate the boss hen to an obnoxious level. Every note she makes, immediately make it too. We pulled Tom away from the angry boss lady at 500 yards (yes we could see and hear them) to my brother John's kill in the alfalfa last spring despite her screaming protests.

■ The game ends and the gobbler wins any time Tom busts me first and a clean kill is less than certain. I don't use a blind, and sometimes I move on an answering gobbler. 20 years ago, I broke all the above rules.

*John Ellis shot this nice gobbler last spring after it was verbally pulled from a boisterous and irate boss hen near the furthest tree line in the background.*



I spent two hours pulling in a boisterous gobbler, and when he came in silently it was from directly behind my ambush against a large oak. I first "felt" him at three yards when he inflated to full strut at the sight of my decoy, but almost immediately deflated with an alarmed "Putt...Putt...Putt...Putt." I swung around the oak and shot as he ran and at the point he lifted for flight. I paid the price for that lost bird, and won't ever repeat the mistake.

Another bird is out there. Restraint on the trigger, and lessons learned, will mean filled tags with clean kills. *WO*

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NEAL HERRMANN

# World Slam

## An adventure like no other

What is a World Slam? Bagging all six subspecies of wild turkeys in North America. A Grand Slam consists of taking the subspecies Eastern (which we have in Wisconsin), Osceola (southern two thirds of Florida), Rio Grande (south and southwest), and Merriams (western states). Adding a Goulds (found mainly in Mexico) makes up the Royal Slam. The Ocellated, found in southern Mexico, is what's needed for the World Slam. The Ocellated differ from the other five, as they don't sport beards and sound much different but carry long spurs and beautiful plumage, otherwise, they act just like the others.

I flew out of Eau Claire on March 18 and met up with a good friend, Kimmy Hanks, in Merida, Mexico where we spent the night. The next morning, our Yukkutz Hunting guides picked us up and took us to the town of Carlos Cano Cruz, where we would spend the week. When we arrived at camp Sunday midday, we unpacked quickly then headed to the field to shoot our camp-supplied guns, new automatic Beretta shotguns. Later, we headed back to camp to get ready for our first evening hunt. While the first evening brought no sightings of birds for me, Kimmy was able to shoot and fill his first World Slam.


Monday morning was a whole different story. Upon doing some calling with our FoxPro caller, a group of seven

jakes and a tom entered the field. With a little soft calling, one nice tom was within range and I was able to make an easy 22-yard shot. The bird was sporting 1 7/8-inch spurs and weighed 11.4 pounds, which, by Ocellated standards, is a very nice bird. My first World Slam was in the books! So it was back to camp to rest up for the evening's hunt, at which time I'd learned Kimmy had shot his second bird. The evening didn't produce any birds for me, but I was able to shoot a coatimundi, which is our version of a raccoon. It was a fun little spot, but we realized there were no birds in the area.

Tuesday morning brought the same weather: sunny and temps rising to 100 degrees. The birds were very active right from the start, with a flock of around 300 hitting the field. We had done a fair amount of calling and were able to pull part of the flock to us, but with so many birds I was unable to make an ethical shot, so we had to let them pass by us. Then the hunt was on. We made a 400-yard move through the low jungle out to another field to set up again, and within an hour we had the flock coming back in. This time one nice tom gave me a clear shot and I was able to take my second Ocellated for my second World Slam. This bird was sporting 1 3/4-inch spurs and was 9 pounds. Two slams in the books and the rest of the week brought relaxation by the pool at camp.



Two world slams complete and a kudamundi taken in Campeche, Mexico.

This was more than a hunt; it was an adventure like no other. Yukkutz Hunting is a top-notch operation and takes care of you every step of the way. I am looking forward to taking this trip again one day and would highly recommend them to anyone looking to finish their World Slam. 

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

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STUART WILKERSON

## Concealed Carry

### Baby Glock: The Model 26 is a viable alternative to a concealed carry revolver

Glock's subcompact Model 26 is the perfect companion for its full-size brethren or anyone looking for a proven concealed carry pistol. Those familiar with the "Baby Glock's" older siblings, the large frame Model 17 and 19, will have no problem acclimating themselves with the subcompact member of the family. Not only do the three share the same caliber, 9 mm Parabellum, but their actions and manufacturing materials are identical. For all practical purposes, the Baby Glock is a bobbed version of the Model 17.

Gaston Glock may not have invented the polymer framed pistol—that honor belongs to Heckler and Koch—but he did popularize the concept by producing an affordable, reliable, lightweight version that would soon be seen on the holsters of policemen throughout the United States and the world. Within a decade of its introduction in 1982, the Glock Model 17 and 19 had virtually superseded the traditional revolver in many, if not most, United States police departments. Several armed forces and law enforcement agencies throughout the world replaced their aging revolvers and semiautomatic pistols with the Glock in this time period.

What they didn't replace was their backup weapons. In that regard, small-frame, double-action .38s and .357s still reigned supreme. Simple, dependable and highly portable, the small-frame revolvers had a lot to recommend them. What they lacked was ammunition capacity. In an era of large capacity magazines, five or six shots were about a half a dozen—or more—rounds lacking compared to what the bad guy might be carrying.

Gaston was not one to miss an opportunity. His large-frame models had found favor across the globe, so why not duplicate that success with a subcompact model? In

1994, the 10-shot, Model 26 "Baby Glock" made its debut and was an instant success. Identical in practically every way, sans size, the Baby Glock was the perfect complement to those who carried a full-size model. Now in its fourth generation, the 26 is one of, if not the most popular small-frame, 9 mm semiautomatic pistols on the market.

The Baby Glock remains sought after 20 years later for the same reasons that made it a success upon its introduction. The 22-ounce pistol is reliable as an anvil, light, concealable and easy to field strip. The latest iteration has dual recoil springs for added durability, a larger magazine release button for quicker access, a shorter trigger travel and four alternative backstraps, among other features.

Glocks may not be the most aesthetically-pleasing firearms, but they are generally ergonomic. Being a subcompact, the Baby Glock's grip may be disconcerting to some owners. The glass-filled, nylon frame's handgrip is short, as one would expect from a subcompact pistol, and leaves two fingers flapping in the breeze. An aftermarket grip extender is available, but it would be nice if one were included with purchase. As earlier noted, in an attempt to fit more hand sizes, the 26 comes with different backstraps, including two with an extended beaver tail. Chances are, most shooters will be content with the standard backstrap.

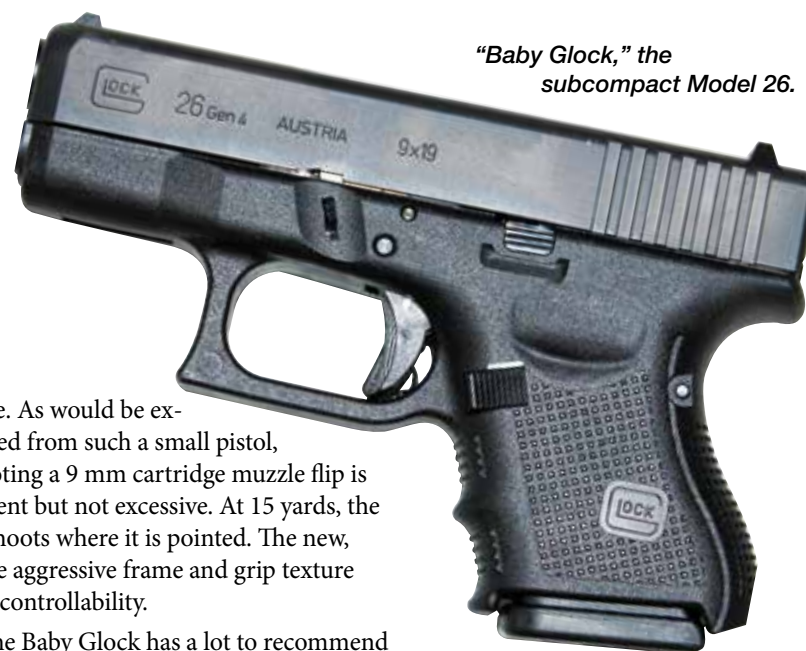
Sights are fixed, with front being white and the rear outlined in white. They probably work fine for those under 40, but those pushing 60 will find them fuzzy, as they will with every other pistol.

Shooting the Baby Glock is much like shooting its full-size Model 17 or 19 brethren. The trigger pull is crisp and has a reasonable 5.5-pound pull weight. Despite weighing less, recoil feels very much the

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"Baby Glock," the subcompact Model 26.

same. As would be expected from such a small pistol, shooting a 9 mm cartridge muzzle flip is present but not excessive. At 15 yards, the 26 shoots where it is pointed. The new, more aggressive frame and grip texture aids controllability.

The Baby Glock has a lot to recommend it, but it is a tad chunky and is not exactly something you would probably want to carry in your pocket. There are many holsters on the aftermarket that will fit the individual shooter's needs.

Most shooters looking for a subcompact semiauto pistol they can count on should definitely consider a Glock Model 26. Reliability is legendary, upgrades readily available and the price is reasonable.

For more information on the Glock Model 26, visit Shorty's Shooting Sports at 2192 S. 60 St., West Allis or visit their website at [shortysshootingsports.com/index.html](http://shortysshootingsports.com/index.html). 

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

#### GLOCK: MODEL 26

##### Caliber

9x19 / Safe Action

LENGTH: 6.41 in.

WIDTH: 1.18 in.

LENGTH BETWEEN SIGHTS: 5.39 in.

HEIGHT: 4.17 in.

BARREL HEIGHT: 1.26 in.

BARREL LENGTH: 3.42 in.

UNLOADED: 21.71 oz.

LOADED: 26.12 oz.

TRIGGER PULL: 5.5 lbs.

TRIGGER TRAVEL: 0.49 in.

##### Magazine Capacity

STANDARD: 10

OPTIONAL: 15/17/33



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*Presents Firearms Info from Ron Stresing*

**RON STRESING**

## New And Improved 20-Gauge Shotguns

### *Smaller, lighter and more versatile*

Although long thought of as a “kid’s gun,” the 20-gauge shotgun is a great choice for experienced or beginning shooters. Truth is, within 40 yards or so, it will do most of the same things a 12-gauge will do, with less recoil. Yes, it does fire a lighter payload of shot. Modern ammunition helps fill that gap with better-performing loads for the 20-gauge. You only need two or three size 8 shot pellets to break a standard clay target. Most experts also agree no more than three to five pellets are needed for a clean kill on game birds or small game.

Trap, skeet or sporting clays can all be effectively shot with a 20-gauge. I found the difference between a round of 16-yard trap with my Browning 12-gauge Over/Under or my 20-gauge BSA Over/Under to be one or two targets at most. Some 12-gauge trap shooters already use 1-ounce or even 7/8-ounce loads. These are the same as standard 20-gauge shot charges. Same with shells for shooting skeet or sporting clays. You will also find the reputation 20s have

for being “snappy” and fast-handling is pretty much true when shooting sporting clays. If my shooting was on, scores were about the same. As the old adage says, “If you are on, you are on.” I’ve started using only my 20-gauge O/U for shooting sporting clays courses where a lot of walking is involved. The lighter weight of the gun and shells, plus low recoil helps you to shoot better over a long day of “sporties.”

While hunting with the 20-gauge I have harvested everything from doves to whitetail deer. My younger son started goose hunting with a 20-gauge single shot and filled all four of his H-1 Horicon Zone goose tags with it his first year. Yes, you can hunt Canada geese and pass shoot waterfowl with a 20-gauge. Just keep the ranges within 40-45 yards. I loaded Adam’s gun with size 4 Hevi-Shot, and the heavier-than-lead pellets absolutely destroyed the geese he hit. With steel size 4 shot over decoys and steel size 2 shot for pass shooting, ducks were no problem, either. Upland or small game hunters have a wide variety of lead shells for the 20.

Everything from light 7/8-ounce loads of size 6 or 7 ½ for doves, quail, grouse and pigeons to 1-ounce size 4 or 5 shot for pheasants. For grouse, rabbits or squirrels at early season close ranges, use 7/8-ounce size 6 shot. After the leaves are down and ranges increase, go to heavier pheasant loads of larger shot. Try Hevi-Shot size 2 for coyotes and size 4 for bobcats.

Probably the best testimony to the power of the 20-gauge as a hunting gun comes from the United Kingdom. Wood pigeon shooter Andy Thomson harvested over 3,500 European wood pigeons in 2015 with his 20-gauge to help prevent crop damage.

My first Iowa buck fell to a 20-gauge 7/8-ounce Winchester slug back in 2004. One shot sent the fat 4-pointer rolling down into the creek bottom I fired from. My son Adam has harvested five whitetail deer with his 20-gauge,

*continued on page 39*

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20-gauge over/under and dove hunting gear.

STRESING, from page 38

including his largest doe to date. When walking heavy cover, or hiking a long way back in, the lighter weight of the gun and shells is really appreciated! Perhaps the best 20-gauge venison gathering performance I've seen was during the 2016 Iowa deer season. A member of the hunting party took a buck and a doe with one shot each using his 20-gauge pump while on a deer drive.

While ideal for beginners, the 20-gauge is also a great gun for the ladies. Try shouldering a few and see if you don't think it's a worthy addition to your gun cabinet. I've come to love the lighter weight, low recoil and fast handling of mine. The more I use my 20-gauge shotguns, the more I like them! [OWO](#)

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



Rooster pheasant harvested by author.

CARPENTER, from page 34

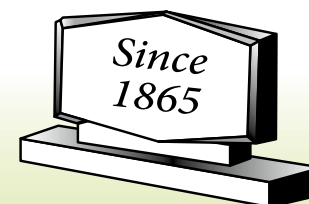
blind moves. Then *slowly* make the necessary moves when an opportunity develops.

**Believe.** If you scouted right, have hunted the area before, or a local expert you trust tells you it's *the* spot, then stay put. It might take a few sessions, but sooner or later a gobbler will show up. The reward will be well worth the time together and the time investment.

**Stay sharp.** Stay awake by telling your young hunter that a gobbler could show up at any time. Watch nature's parade outside. Opportunities develop and fade quickly. Don't miss them.

**Watch the bird.** Exiting a blind to rush after a downed turkey can take attention away from precious moments during which the bird can get up and run away. Instead, have the young hunter shuck in a new shell and wait a minute with shotgun trained on the tom, ready to shoot again. [OWO](#)

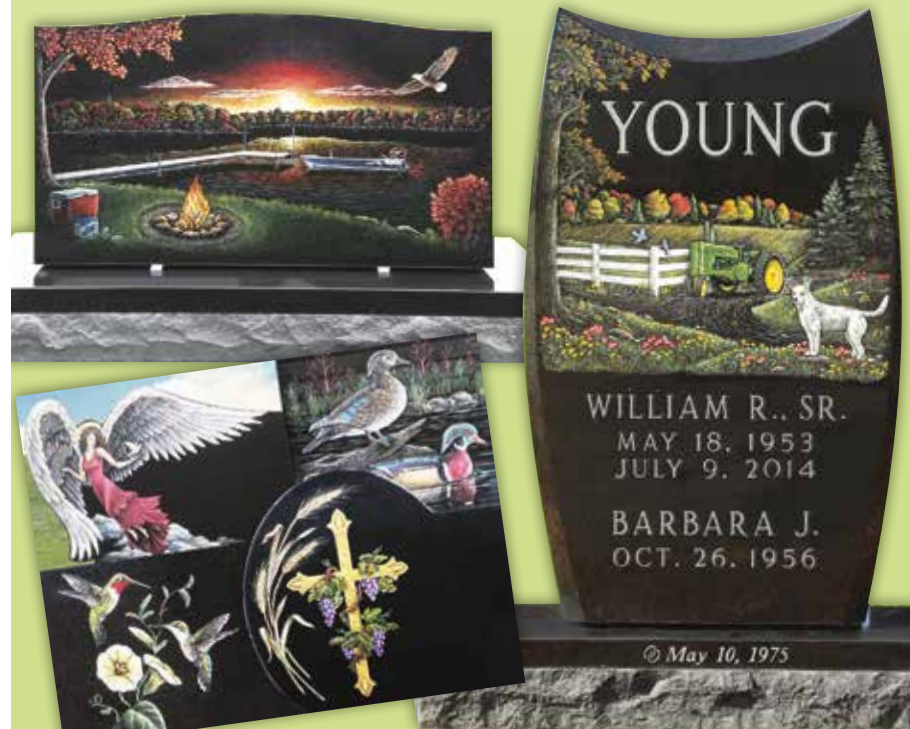
Native son Tom Carpenter writes about the outdoor world for a variety of national and regional publications



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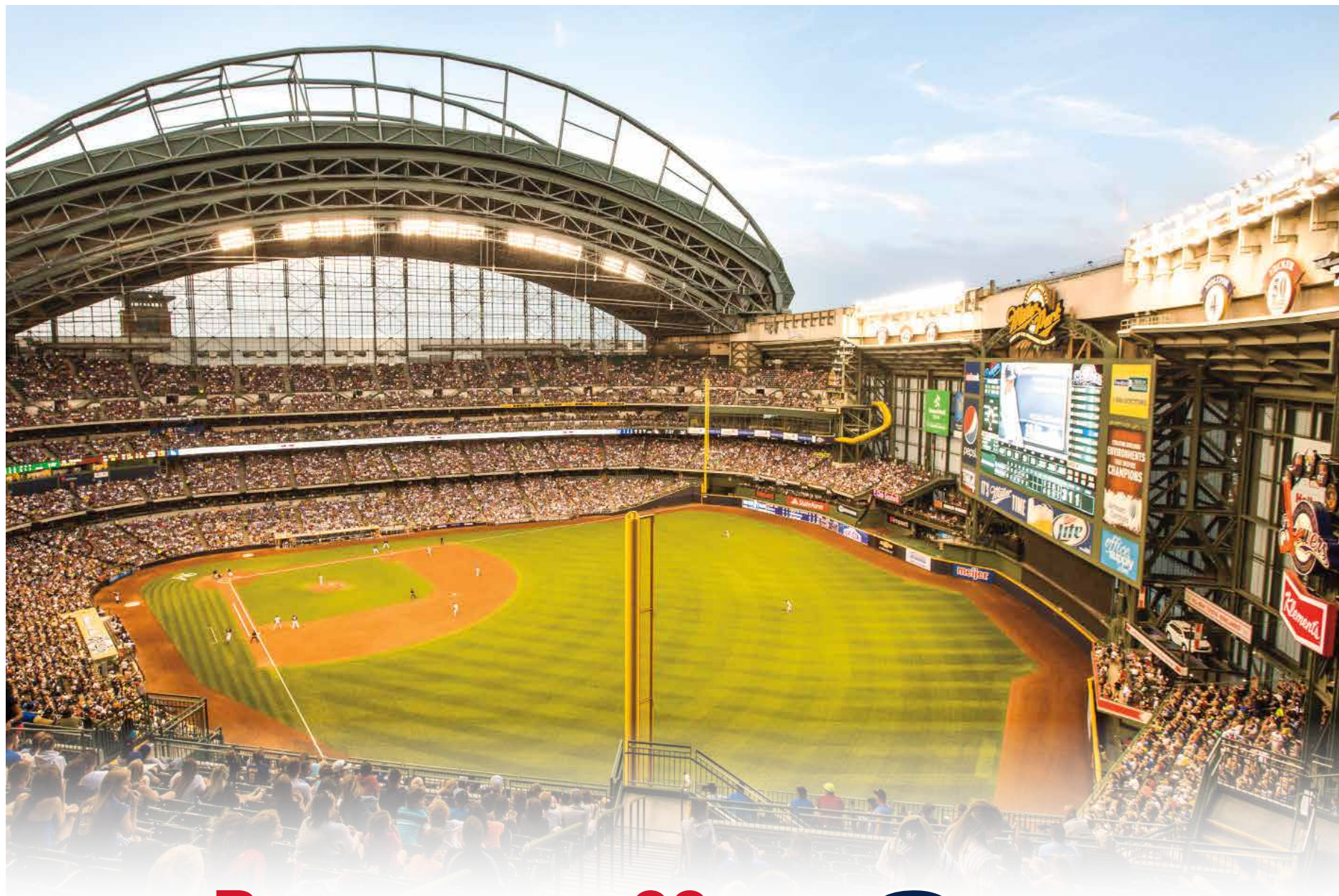
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