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PHIL SCHWEIK

Targeting Musky Expert advice for the early season

ith months to prepare and countless hours to think and read about it, opening day of musky season will soon arrive. If you are south of Highway 10, the season begins with the general fish season opening May 5. The season begins at the start of Memorial Day Weekend, May 26, north of Highway 10.

When it comes to targeting muskies early in the season, I generally start with my old standby lures like small to medium sized bucktails in a natural color. I like black and silver, brown and gold, or a combination of brown and white with a gold blade. I work them slow and meticulously and I cover a lot of water. That doesn't mean I won't try out some of the "new" musky lures I picked up over the winter. Some of these new baits may be just what the doctor ordered when it comes to starting right out of the chute.

Giving the muskies something that they have never seen before can be a deadly tactic, especially when it comes to

pressured fish. I would probably look at running some of the new medium sized jerk and rubber baits like those from Suick Lures or Musky Innovations. I wouldn't be opposed to trying out top water style baits on the opener like the Dr. Evil or Fat Bastard by Lake X Lures.

When it comes to Opening Day location, I prefer to keep it simple. I like to target shallow, weedy locations and areas that have reduced current when fishing a river. The water is still fairly cold and muskies will not stand for a lot of current at this time of the year. They will move in and out of the current to feed, but generally at this time of the year, most muskies can be found lounging around in shallow locations well away from heavy current areas.

Get out and pursue that greatest of freshwater fish, the musky, and have a wonderful time with friends and family. Make this season a great one!

Good luck. 12



Hooksetters' quide Phil Schweik prepares to release a 52-inch Wisconsin River musky with a 25 inch girth.

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.



TOM LUBA

Second Chance Bass *Spring throwback bait earns writer's confidence*

ife is full of ups and downs. Sometimes really close together. Like swinging and missing with two strikes. Right after you swung and missed at strike two. Not unlike getting a good, solid hit from a spring largemouth on your jig, only to rear back and set the hook on absolutely nothing. Luckily there's a way to get another crack at that bass before it does a victory lap.

It's called "throwback" bait. A throwback bait is a "second chance" to catch a fish you just missed by tossing a different bait back to the same spot. You can guarantee every tournament pro has at least one. Missed fish mean missed money. Losing mere ounces can cost serious money.

The only thing I ever knew about throw backs was when the Packers dragged out the old uniforms. I found out about them for bass after I missed more than my share of initial hits. My thought was to keep on throwing the same bait, regardless. It worked for pike. But, bass, I discovered, were a little more discerning. Maybe because they usually hold in a much smaller area and possibly have a little bit better memory.

My introduction to the Yamamoto Senko soft plastic stick worm wasn't earth shattering. I wish there was a blinding flash of light that made it my throwback bait for

Senkos are great anytime, but they excel in the spring as a throwback bait after a missed bite.

spring bass, but nothing really stands out. If anything, it might have started when I was trying it as primary spring bass bait. I flipped one out toward what I thought was a spawn bed, and promptly got a nasty professional overrun, aka, a big backlash. The bait must have landed right on the bed because by the time I got the snarl out (I was lucky) and reeled up the slack, it was fifteen feet away from the shoreline I tossed it at. The fish was still holding it, so I promptly slammed the hook home.

The next thing I remember was missing another fish on a jig a few days later, swiftly firing a Senko back to the same area and immediately getting the second bite and setting the hook. It's been that way ever since.

The nice thing about Senkos is that they work all season long, and not just as a throwback. If you watch the bait, it stays horizontal and just softly undulates as it sinks. Best I can figure is that the no-hurry movement shows the fish it's not scared of

them and that drives those bass nuts. I'm not as fast as I used to be on the hook set, so a harder bite makes me quite happy.

The Senko is worth its salt (the salt content is what supposedly makes it work so well) in the post- spawn. I've caught a pile of fish in the middle of spawning boat channels before they headed out after the spawn. I like to rig it Texas style with no weight, just a 3/0 Gamakatsu Round Bend worm hook. I'll fish it the same way in the fall when the cooler water draws the bass shallow to start feeding.

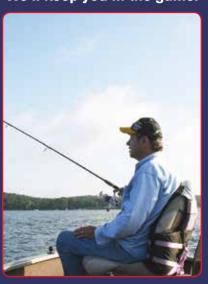
In a nutshell, if you haven't got throw-back baits for bass, you're probably missing catchable fish. Adding the Senko to your fishing might be like finding a new clean-up hitter. And we know the excitement at the ball park when that number four bat steps up. Try it now.

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.





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JIM SERV

Donahue Super Sports *Start your power sports adventure here*

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"Our goal is to help people have fun. It's just people taking care of people here. Many of those old philosophies like that still apply here today," Donahue reminds. "For us, it's all about the customer."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 33

MIKE YURK

Hooking Future Anglers

How to catch and release our kids to a lifetime of fun

ne of an angler's great joys and obligations is taking kids fishing. We all know children, whether they are grandchildren, nieces and nephews or the young boy or girl across the street. However we know them, it's wonderful to pass the joys and fun of fishing to them.

I have three children that I took fishing when they were young and they now have children, providing me with seven grandchildren to take fishing. I have taken lots of neighborhood kids fishing over the years and the grandchildren of fishing buddies. Taking a kid fishing and seeing that big smile on their face as they catch a fish is one of life's great pleasures.

Keep it fun

For kids to want to continue fishing, they need to have fun while fishing now. My first rule when taking a kid fishing is to leave once he or she is not having fun. Forcing a kid to stay out longer will turn what should be a good time into a bad time. If their experiences are not fun, then you have lost them, perhaps forever.

When you take kids out, it should be all about them. Most often I don't even fish. If the kids are real young and inexperienced, then I spend most of the time baiting hooks, casting and taking fish off the hooks for them. If they are a bit older and can at least cast on their own, then they can fish on their own. In those cases, I can

fish, but even then, when I have fish on the line, I hand my rod to them and let them bring it in. Kids need to catch fish. If they don't catch fish, it won't be fun.

Most often, especially with younger or first time anglers, we go for panfish because they are the easiest to find. Once you find them, you can normally catch a bunch of them. Kids don't care what size the fish are; they just like catching fish.

Make it an adventure

Make the fishing trip an adventure. Some kids have short attention spans. That's okay because they eventually grow out of it. What I do is take them to a fast food restaurant for breakfast or we stop at a gas station for hot dogs. Kids enjoy that and it becomes part of the adventure. When they get on the lake they might be good for two or three (more?) hours.

Anytime I get over three hours with them on the water is good and I normally don't plan on much longer than that. When they get antsy, we go in, and often on the way home we stop for an ice cream cone or snack. By the time we leave, they will have had breakfast or lunch, fished, and ate a snack. They will return home from an adventure they won't forget.





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WAYNE MORGENTHALER

A Bluegill Trip for the Ages Memory made with Dad is never to be forgotten

y number one bluegill trip was with my dad over 50 years ago. We were fishing below the Lake Nelson Dam north of Hayward. The week before dad and I had canoed from the Nelson dam to Chittamo Flowage near the town of Frog Creek. This river was fascinating, included a waterfall and seemed, at the time, to be in the middle of a big forest.

We did not have our fishing poles along on the canoe trip because we simply wanted to see some new area. As the canoe went over the top of lily pads and weeds on the first part of the trip, I noticed a lot of fish swirls. Lake Nelson had a reputation for holding big bluegills and was included in the bluegill fishing contests sponsored by the St. Paul Pioneer Press.

My parents lived 12 miles south of Hayward, so the return trip to Lake Nelson

was a short ride. We arrived armed with our boat and fishing equipment around 6 pm at the lower part of the river below the Nelson dam. The current is a slow-moving with many bends bordered by cattails. Dad would pull on the old Martin outboard motor while I rowed half way to our destination. Once the motor started and the swearing stopped, we were all smiles.

We traveled about a mile down the channel where I remembered seeing some boils. This spot was easy to recall since there was a highly visible dead tree marking the location. We always used Zebco 33 reels with 8-pound test. Dad threw out a small bubble bobber with a number 8 hook baited with a juicy earthworm. Just as soon as the bobber hit, that red and white bubble looked like it was on a runway ready for takeoff. Suddenly, the float would disappear below the surface. I loved

to hear the zinging of the drag from my reel as the fish took off.

Anytime your bobber moves that fast, it is a great sign that fish are active and in control of anything that landed in their protected area. The action was wild and furious and we had some good battles with both lily pads and huge gills. When all was said and done, we ended up with 18 of those bulls all around 10 inches and each weighing three quarters of a pound. I always wished we would have taken a picture of that stringer, so I was very pleased when visiting the Hayward Fishing Hall of Fame to see a similar stringer of fish prepared by a taxidermist. Whoever caught those fish must have enjoyed the same experience as dad and I had and was able to save the moment.

Just for the record, the largest Wisconsin bluegill by weight is 2 pounds, 9.8

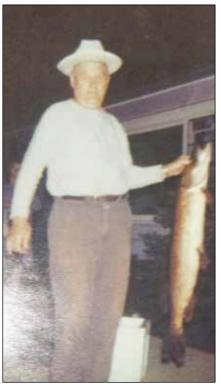
Mike Dreischmeier with a nice 9-inch bluegill.

ounces, and was caught in 1995.

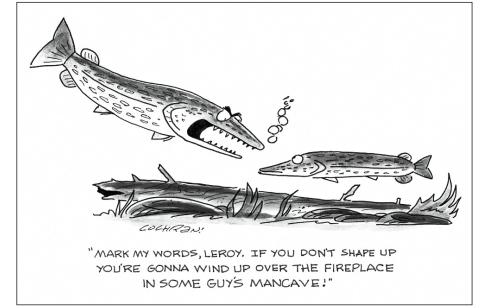
In an upcoming issue of *On Wisconsin Outdoors*, I will write about a bluegill fishing trip that took place near Warrens on the cranberry bogs.

Remember to always take a friend fishing. \triangleright

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.



Jack Morgenthaler with 14 lb 13 oz northern in 1963.



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On Wisconsin
Outdoors

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TOM CARPENTER

When Kids Meet Crappies Old specklesides brings out the best in young anglers

hen I was a young badger cub fishing the backwaters, ponds and occasional lake of southwestern Wisconsin, bluegills were king.

Sunnies were abundant, grew to decent size, hit willingly and fought hard. Plus, their filleted flesh was sweet, firm, and unmatched for delightful taste when dusted in seasoned flour or cornmeal and sizzled up in Mom's black cast-iron skillet.

That's probably why crappies were a trophy fish. They were just less common, and we really could only catch them in the springtime when feeding and spawning urges brought fish out of the main river channels and into the backwater sloughs, or up out of the deep holes or open water and into the shallows of ponds and lakes.



I still believe that a crappie does not taste as good as a sunfish. But, still, crappies were mighty satisfactory coming out of the skillet. We were equal opportunity eaters.

But what was it about crappies that then (as now) fascinated me so? No small part was the fishes' handsome appearance. Sunfish were bright and gaudy, seemingly painted by random, colorful brush strokes. Crappies wore a reserved pattern of silver and black. A crappie's mouth was just cool to study. I was fascinated by the way it opened up wide due to that paper-membrane extension to better slurp in the minnows we offered as bait.

That was another thing about crappies: you got to use minnows as bait. While you could occasionally catch crappies on worms (if the bait was kept slowly moving), minnows were infinitely more reliable and fun to use.

Special were the days when Dad would place our old metal minnow bucket in the car or boat. "Maybe we'll get some minnies today," he'd smile, using his nickname for minnows. He knew it was a treat to get a scoop or two at a baitshop. It was probably also a reward for all the worms I'd dug in barnyards and nightcrawlers I'd picked on rainy nights for bait.

Springtime was always crappie time, and that was integral to the attraction: To be out in a sunny-warm May day, tossing out light pencil bobber rigs and watching the floats sinksink-sink slowly down in the fashion crappies take bait.

Crappies had their own way of fighting and you could always tell when you had one on. Bluegills tugged, bucked, bulled and circled down low. Crappies tried to swim at an angle straight away and they splashed around on the surface.

We must have realized how special crappies were and how delicate their mouths were, because we had a small net used only for them. Lifting a crappie into the boat or swinging it onto shore constituted breaking an angling rule because the fish could easily rip off and be lost. None of us liked a lost fish when a fish fry was in the offing and when it was a trophy crappie (and they all were) on the line.

I still love crappie fishing. Make it a rite of spring with some badger cubs you know. Contrary to popular belief, crappies aren't as "early season" as you might think and they don't really get running until May gets in full swing.

Rig up a couple light rods with thin bobbers and thin-wire size 4 hooks, grab a bucket of minnies, and create your own crappie memories. V

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



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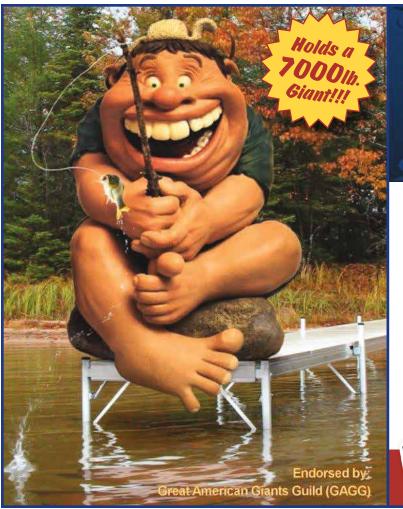
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DAVID DUWE

A Guide Being Guided Lake Geneva challenges tourney angler, guide

ver wonder what it would be like to fish with a pro-angler on your home lake? I had the opportunity to do just that last fall during a Yamaha Outboards media day on my home lake, Lake Geneva, in southeastern Wisconsin. The pro-angler I teamed up with was Robert Blosser, a touring walleye pro sponsored by Skeeter Boats and Yamaha Outboards. This was Robert's first time on Lake Geneva.

Before our trip, he had about four hours to pre-fish before taking media people from throughout the country out on Lake Geneva. As I can attest, Lake Geneva can be a very complex lake due to the extreme depths and water clarity. We were fishing in early fall, which is usually a prime time for deep water smallmouth. The day I went out with Robert I had a morning guide trip on the same lake and it was a tough bite.

I noticed that Robert tried to keep the tactics simple; I expected this since I often do the same when I'm guiding first-time customers. We were fishing live bait on

a lindy rig. The presentation is to slowly troll using his bow-mount Minn Kota trolling motor. With the fall pattern, the bait of choice is usually some kind of minnow. Robert brought some awesome black tailed chubs that aren't available in local bait shops. I thought they wouldn't last a minute in the water before enticing a hungry predator. We fished the black tailed chubs on a seven-foot medium action rod spooled with eight-pound Crystal Fireline with a four-foot, six-pound fluorocarbon leader and a number two hook. Robert believes that with the four-foot leader the chub is allowed more freedom to move.

While pre-fishing, Robert highlighted some main lake points as holding good numbers of fish. We concentrated our efforts in 23- to 25- feet of water. We fished near Black Point and Conference Point. It was interesting that he was able to pinpoint two of the best spots for fall smallmouth without having been on the water before. He found these spots while pre-fishing and just driving his boat slow trying to locate

fish on his Lowrance graph. Robert likes to run the boat from the deep water to the shallows since it gives you a better view of the drop off.

The whole time at Black Point we were marking fish tight to bottom. We had several short hits, but they just didn't seem to bite. We were fishing during the mid-day period, a difficult time on Lake Geneva, which certainly didn't help. We did try drop shotting small four-inch plastic worms, as well. Robert caught several fish pre-fishing with plastics, but not knowing who was going to get into his boat on media day, he opted for live bait as that often is the best and easiest method for anglers of all skill levels.

It was interesting to see how Robert was anxious with the slow bite just like I am with guide customers. All he wanted was for everyone in his boat to catch some fish. Some days you can have the right bait and the right location and still not catch fish. It's the nature of the game.



Yamaha pro angler Robert Blosser with a nice Lake Geneva smallmouth. Note pros wear lifejackets.

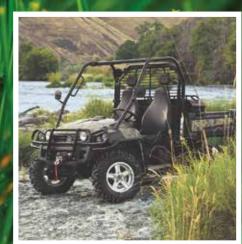
Though the fishing was slow, it was interesting to fish with a pro-angler who, in a short period of time, dissected my home lake and figured out many of the subtle nuances of a very complex body of water. I guess that's why these guys are pros!

Captain Dave Duwe is owner of Dave Duwe's Guide Service and guides the lakes of southeastern Wisconsin, specializing in Delevan Lake and Lake Geneva. Find him at fishlakegeneva.com or fishdelavanlake.com or contact him at 262.728.8063.



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TOM CARPENTER

Stream Trout Stealth *Tread lightly for fishing success*

here's no finer way to spend a spring morning than wandering the banks of a gurgling Wisconsin trout stream. Fresh green leaves adorn the trees. Songbirds sing from streamside branches. Maybe a rooster pheasant is cackling, a ruffed grouse drumming or a wild turkey gobbling.

And if you do things right, bright-sided trout will be tugging and splashing at the end of your line. But that doesn't just happen. Trout are survivors – wary of your shadow on the water, footstep vibrations from the stream bank, and silty clouds kicked up by scared frogs, spooked minnows or other trout.

Wary trout – browns, rainbows and

brook – will always punish the lazy and lackadaisical angler. You have to commit yourself to putting a set of basic rules into play whenever you fish a stream for trout. This approach involves crossing back and forth, stooping over, creeping up on your knees, crawling, or even taking a five-minute detour to get the best angle at a fish's lie.

The cardinal rule of stream trout fishing is this: Work your way upstream, that is, with the current coming at you. Trout face into the current as they watch and wait for food, and you at least have a smidgen of a chance to locate a fishy spot before the fish locate you. If there is any sun shining, always work to keep your shadow off the

water.

Take your time when you find a good trout lie. This is what trout fishing is about. It's a hunt and a stalk more than a hike and a cast. Read the current. Imagine just where that fish might be holding. In your mind's eye, drift your bait or fly through, or consider how your lure might swing into the trout's line of sight.

Cast upstream of where you think that fish is. Actually, I do more flipping, tossing, swinging and dabbling than I do actually casting on a trout stream because trout will race for safety at the loud plunk of a lure or bait hitting water.

Let the current do the work of carrying your offering naturally to the fish. When fishing with live bait, you might need to lighten up your split shot to be sure the bait tumbles naturally, or add weight to get it down into the trout zone in deep or fast water. Hold your rod tip high and feel your offering work its way along. Trout are too wary to pick up something that is





A trio of brook trout stalked up with a stealth approach.

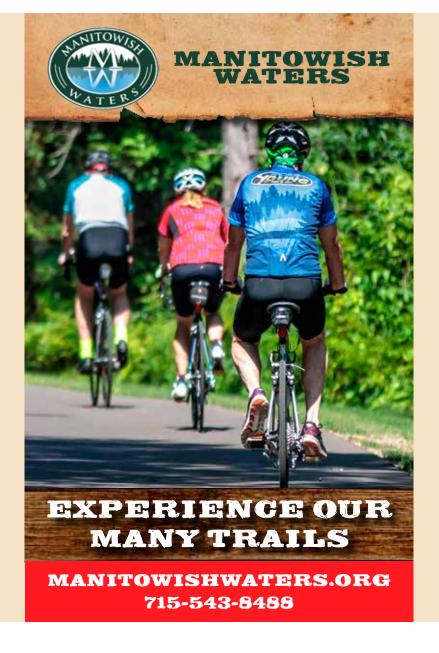
drifting along oddly, or looks out of place.

With live bait, don't wait too long to set the hook (a few seconds should be fine), because you don't want that trout swallowing the hook, should you decided to release it to fight another day. If a hook does get swallowed, clip your line and tie on a new hook. But don't feel guilty about an occasional trout dinner, as there is no finer eating in this world.

For live bait, half of a fat, sassy night-crawler is hard for trout to resist. On the hardware side, little in-line spinners and tiny spoons offer flash that trigger strikes, while small minnowbaits can really pull in hungry trout. Fly-wise, you can't beat old standards like woolly buggers, crayfish imitations and, as summer gets going, terrestrial look-alikes such as crickets, grass-hoppers, beetles and ants.

Get out on one of Wisconsin's spectacular trout streams soon and escape the world for a few hours, stalking trout to the swish and rush of cold water on a warm spring day.

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





KYLER CHELMINIAK

The Map is My Diary

Use topography knowledge to make you a better bass fisherman Ver! FedEx is here!" No, it isn't a shipment of fishing lures in the lake, I can now start surveying the that

yler! FedEx is here!" No, it isn't a shipment of fishing lures this time. Rather arriving in a yellow padded envelope is an unblemished topography map of Bass Lake. Unfolding each part releases the aroma of new ink and I can feel the smoothness of its waterproof coat. Fully opened, this oversized snapshot of the new lake I want to master is going to be my timeline and link chart to reveal new leads for the best areas.

At first glance, my attention is brought to the "Lake Description" box in the upper, left-hand section of the map. As I read, I learn that this "small spring fed lake" only has largemouth bass and has an average depth of eight feet. There is a lot of natural cover, including submergent and emergent vegetation along with laydowns and stumps. My favorite style of fishing is exploring shallow water vegetation, so this new adventure has already thinking of sunny skies and thick, juicy water-salads.

After learning what kinds of cover exist in the lake, I can now start surveying the lake. I divide it into three sections by the shape of the lake: the left third looks like a tomato, the middle third looks like a large pear, and the right third looks like an apple that's already been eaten. These shapes are important because this is a spring fed lake, which usually means that the middle is the deepest and there is a "bowl" like progression of bottom contour until the water reaches the bank, unlike a river which can have shallow sand bars and islands a ways away from any bank.

I highlight the one- to six-foot contours at the north end of the "pear" section of the lake. This is where most of the spawning will happen on this lake; there is the largest concentration of emergent vegetation, there is a gravel bank on the northwest side of the bay, and it is always exposed to the extremely biased spring sun, which will make it the warmest sec-

tion of the lake. I highlight everything less than six feet because I am predicting that is where the freshest submergent vegetation will be at this moment. Largemouths are magnets to sprouting green weeds, so I will concentrate on these high-percentage depths.

Next I place a few "Xs" on the west bank of the "pear" section where I see a number of square roads creating a subdivision. Though it doesn't show it on the lake, I can suspect by the neighborhood that there are plenty of lakefront properties, which means plenty of docks, which means plenty of protection and warmth for a bass readying to claim a spot for her newborns.

Though I could look at the other sections of the lake and see what they contribute to the lake's ecosystem, I have set my mind on going to the "pear" first. Because I want to spend quite a bit of time this year on Bass Lake, I can worry about the other sections later. I am not in a tournament, so



Thrilling success of a good catch at a new lake! time is not against me. I am out to gather information so I can come home and report my findings, which will be labeled carefully on the map; fish catches, secret depressions, and favorite docks will all have secret codified symbols on the map that will have a detailed description in a notebook that no other angler will ever find!

If done correctly, my map of Bass Lake should look like a crime map from "CSI."

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

GARY ENGBERG

River Gold

Now is the time for Wisconsin, Mississippi walleyes

pring fishing for river walleyes is a Wisconsin tradition. As soon as water temperatures nudge toward 40 degrees, anglers flock to the rivers of southern and central Wisconsin. Our state is blessed with an abundance of rivers that hold walleye and their close cousin, the sauger. Anglers try to find the staging areas where the fish congregate and intercept them before and after they spawn.

Walleye migration is completed in March and April when they come to impassable dams. Many fish will stay within a mile of the dams, but others filter back downriver to suitable spawning sites. The female walleye then searches for the proper structure

and bottom content - hard and covered with pea-sized rock and gravel - for laying her eggs. In some rivers, like the Wolf, walleyes spawn in marshes. A slight current flowing over the eggs is needed to oxygenate the eggs.

Not all walleyes spawn at or near the dams. For example, the Prairie du Sac Dam on the Wisconsin River at Sauk Prairie is a very popular location for spring anglers. There can be as many as 100 boats directly below the dam in the tailrace area fishing for walleyes on a spring day. There are countless places below the dam and many miles downriver where female walleye will stage and eventually lay eggs. Some of these

locations never get any fishing pressure.

A Few Tips...

River fish constantly have to fight the current. Considerable energy is used fighting the current, so river walleyes will use any type of structure to break this current. This is how river walleyes conserve their energy.

Current-blocking structures can change from river to river, but things to look for include wing dams; wood; fallen trees; boulders; rock piles; islands; bridges; river bends; humps; and depressions in the river's bottom. The structures break the river's flow and allow the walleyes to wait and ambush any food that passes or floats past. Try



A husky Wisconsin River walleye.

heading downriver while looking for these holding and staging areas instead of motoring to the dam.

The best tackle for spring walleyes is the basic jig and minnow or jig and plastic combo. Try using eight pound monofilament such as Berkley Trilene XT in green to match the color of the stained water that you'll encounter. Monofilament is forgiving and a little line stretch is needed for the many snags you will find in most rivers.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 32



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TYLER FLORCZAK

Necessity-The Mother of Invention

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Guide's custom made lures born from need for quality

lint Worden is not your average angler. He's an old school, lure-making, musky fighting, fly-tying fishing fanatic that takes great pride in doing things a little less conventional. But don't be fooled.

Just because the Chetek resident prefers to use his own homemade lures and flies and somewhat different fishing styles when targeting a given species of fish, that doesn't mean he is less successful than other anglers who purchase all of their gear from local or big-name sport shops.

Worden, who is the owner of Worden's Guide Service and CNP Bucktails in Chetek, is a very successful local guide and fisherman. He is best known for designing and building an array of custom bladed baits, along with a variety of jigs and flies. He has also perfected the unique and less common fishing method of fly fishing for

predatory fish like muskellunge and northern pike.

Worden designs a variety of colorful, innovative and relatively inexpensive lures and flies for just about any species of fish, whether it's bluegills and crappies, trout, smallmouth bass or the fiercest freshwater creature—the musky. He also creates custom orders for clients who request specific patterns, sizes or colors.

Worden said that the passion he developed for fly-tying, making bass and musky jigs and creating homemade bucktails came more from frustration than creativity at first

"It was a matter of quality," Worden explained. "Some bucktails and flies I was buying in stores would fall apart after catching just one or two fish. They weren't

high-quality baits, so I started making my

The majority of baits and flies Worden sells are custom-made to the color, style and blades customers prefer. He also makes smallmouth bass poppers for himself and clients, but sells flies and musky lures at Rod & Gun Sport Shop in Chetek.

The green butt wooly worm has been a signature bait for Worden over the years when targeting panfish. "It's the mainstay of my fly tying," he said. "I tie a zillion of those each year."

Worden noted that his homemade CNP Bucktails, which are made out of real white-tail deer tails from the Chetek area, is the most successful game fish lure he's developed.

Sure Worden enjoys conventional methods of fishing like casting on lakes, such as the Holcombe Flowage—the same body of water where he caught a massive 51-inch water wolf (musky) on a size O chartreuse



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



Clint Worden, owner of Worden's Guide Service in Chetek, holds a 51-inch musky he caught on the Holcombe Flowage with his homemade chartreuse and black CNP buckail.



and black Magnum bucktail. But Worden has been on a quest to catch big fish on the fly rod during the last few open water seasons.

He explained that he fly fishes for musky and smallies on rivers because, when river fishing, anglers often know where fish will be/should be located, whether it's in a deep pool, secluded near structure, along a weed line or by a current change.

When river fishing, Worden uses his trusty Jon Boat, which is specifically set

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16



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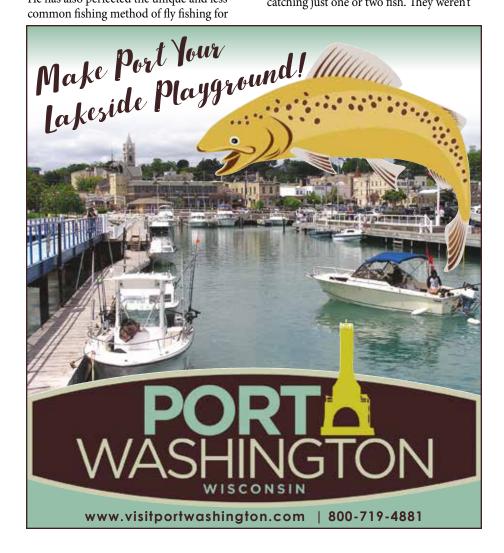
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BOB WILSON

Summer Trolling 101 *Preparing to fish off the water comes first*

ith the spring walleye run becoming a distant memory, we can look forward to the summer trolling season. Rather than highlight some of my favorite trolling patterns, however, I would like to touch on some of the maintenance I perform in preparation of the season.

The boat is our most important piece of equipment and it needs to be properly stored and maintained over winter to ensure its operation in the spring. Batteries are a key part in determining whether or not we will be going fishing and, later, returning to shore. I leave the batteries in the boat over winter. As long as they are charged with an on-board charging system or a battery tender, they should be fine. Marine antifreeze should be in every system that has water, such as livewell pumps, bilge pumps, and wash-down systems. I test all my switches that operate everything in the boat. I check my fuses and make sure I have spares. My boat is now prepared for the upcoming fishing season.

A piece of equipment that is too often overlooked is the boat trailer. My preseason maintenance regimen is to first put the boat in the lake and park at the dock. I inspect my bunks and replace carpeting, if needed. I then move on to the yoke and check my winch strap. A winch strap should never be repaired. If it has issues, replace it for safety's sake, and that also goes for the safety chain. If the winch is bad, replace it at this time.

I then move on to the trailer's tires and valve stems and replace as necessary. I also pay particular attention to bearings. A bearing that goes bad on the road is not a good situation. By inspecting, greasing or replacing, a ruined fishing trip can be prevented.

Once the boat and trailer have been attended to, I gather my fishing equipment and take inventory to determine what is good and what needs to be repaired or replaced. Rods and reels are a fishing guide's

bread and butter and it is imperative that they are in good order. Anything not up to snuff must be addressed. Counter reels need special care to clean so as not to offset the counters. With trolling rods, I use a Q-tip and run it around the inside of the eyes looking for any snags or chips. I clean all eyes and replace any that are damaged. I finish by wiping my rods clean with a damp rag.

Next are my trolling boards. I use Off Shore boards and check them for bad flags and clips. I use the Or 16 on the rear and the Or 18 for the center and replace as needed. I inspect every clip and change pads or replace clips where needed. My boards should now be in good shape for the coming season.

I use a lot of crankbaits when trolling in my area lakes and I regularly rehab them by changing hooks, split rings, and touchup painting them. I use the new Baitmate roll-on stick on crank baits. As for crawler harnesses, I make my own. I use two or



three hook set ups and I only use treble hooks. I am out there to hook fish, not to play with them.

I hope these tips help put more fish in your boat. Bob Wilson at bobgonefishingagain@gmail.com 608-403-1239 or Tyler at tylergonefishingagain@yahoo.com.

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



CAPT. LEE HAASCH

Spring Fishing Arrives in Algoma *Long winter makes for fast spring action*

s Trevor unhooked the last line and shoved the bow away from the dock, I powered us away from the dock and pointed the bow towards the harbor entrance. What a difference a year makes. Last year by early May, we saw water temps rising to the mid-40s and king salmon were appearing. This year, Mother Nature threw us a curve-ball with record snow falls in April, delaying the open water season for all but the hardiest anglers. The good news is the delay has left us some of the best brown trout fishing in the shallows of Lake Michigan shoreline and some awesome steelhead fishing in the tributary streams as the snow run-off has provided ideal conditions into the month of May.

Today we will target the shallow structure along the shoreline north of Algoma. Setting up Rapala Husky Jerks on my planner boards and adding a couple of my best Acme Cleos on my Slide Driver rigs. It didn't take long, "Fish come on!" Trevor shouted as he grabbed the inside birds rod. "Pink Tiger UV, Number 12. That

• AHNAPEE TRAIL SUMMER SOLSTICE 50

had four bites yesterday!" Trevor added as he jumped across the deck, "Another one! Who's up?" he yelled as he slid the pounding Slide Diver rod out of the holder.

"Glow watermelon Cleo, and it's a brute!" he exclaimed as he handed the rod to the customer. Moments later, Trevor slid the net under a fat, football-shaped brown trout. The action was pretty fast. These fish have had a long winter and as the water temps started to rise in late March, only to have Mother Nature drop 30" of white stuff on us in April cooling the water back down.

What does that mean for the summer anglers? Well, after back-to-back mild winters, which left us with warmer than normal water temps in later summer and slowing the bite, this year should see a little delayed start (May vs. March) to the fishing season. This is great news for anglers traveling to the lakeshore this year. I expect to see brown trout dominating the catch in May with a good number of lake trout backing them up to give anglers some

Steelhead fishery!



Mixed bag catches including big Steelhead and trophy King Salmon are common during spring outings out of the port of Algoma.

excellent shallow water angling opportunities. Steelhead should be making their return trip to Lake Michigan from the tributaries in mid- to late- May and will provide anglers with some tail-dancing acrobatics as they feed heavily in June. I also expect to see the king salmon cruising shoreward from the depths in early June and give us a fantastic king and steelhead bite.

The longer winter had open water anglers chomping at the bit to launch their boats and start trolling, it's taken a while to get here, but the big positive is with the cooler start to spring, I expect to see great fishing to stretch through-out the entire summer. 2018 looks to be one of those magical summers where the cooler water temps will give us a sustained king salm-

on action right through those hot days of August and carry us into fall. This doesn't happen often, but it is setting up to be one of those special fishing seasons,

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: www.FishAlgoma.com or call 1-888-966-3474. From Capt. Lee and the crew aboard the Grand Illusion 2, good luck and good fishing!

Capt. Lee Haasch is a charter captain out of Algoma, WI. Capt. Lee has over 45 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.



FLORCZAK, FROM PAGE 14

up for fly fishing, but works just as well for clients who want to fish with a baitcaster and spinning reel. He primarily uses his Crestliner on bigger waters and lakes and provides all of the fishing equipment for guided trips.

Worden's Guide Service is based out of Chetek and offers day trips around the Chetek Chain of Lakes, Holcombe Flowage, Chain of Lakes in Rusk County, Rice Lake, the Red Cedar and Chippewa rivers and many other bodies of water in Northwestern Wisconsin.

To book a trip, purchase custom baits and flies, or for more information, contact Worden at 715-859-6621 or email cwfly-fish@yahoo.com.

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.



FOLLOW US ON

DAN MOERICKE

An 'Up Nort' Report *Endless Winter*

should have been backing my boat into a landing to chase spawning perch. I should have been wearing a baseball cap and light jacket. Instead, my buddy Mike Bishop and I were sliding my sled out of the back of my vehicle and trudging in full winter gear out onto the Eagle River chain for some mid-April ice fishing.

Fishing catalogues clog my mailbox. Pallets stacked high with Leinenkugels Summer Shandy line the grocery store aisles. The calendar says April, but my auger head was hitting the snow before I

punched through the 30+ inches of ice.

This wasn't some 'last fling' ice fishing trip. This was 'getting out before the big blizzard'...you remember the one...the one that dropped over 20 inches of heavy wet snow across much of the state. Shawano County was the lucky recipient of over thirty inches.

On this day of the endless winter of 2018, at least the crappies were somewhat cooperative. What they lacked in numbers, they made up for in quality. We set up on the edge of a 20-foot hole and over a two hour period managed to put

a handful of crappies and a lone bluegill in the bucket. Fresh fish would be on the menu while hunkering down during the blizzard that was to come.

My boat won't be moving any time soon. My camper is buried. My ice auger and snow blower continue to be front and center in the garage. This winter has to end sometime. Better days are coming. They have to. I hope. 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



Want more fishing columns from the OWO Fishing experts?

Connect with Inland Fishing under www.onwisconsinoutdoors.com and read more now. Ride along with Jerry Kiesow as his canoe capsizes and an icy bath leaves our columnist happy to be alive to tell the story. Read how to target other species in northern Wisconsin's ceded territory when the walleye limit is reached with Chris Rehlinger.



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TOM CARPENTER

Badger Birds *Common Yellowthroat*

his sprightly little warbler migrates northward with springtime as the leaves unfurl and warmth comforts the land. Once a few insects start buzzing about, you'll see yellowthroats flitting through thickets, tangles and dense forests across Wisconsin. These little hunters work close to the ground and eat spiders, bees, wasps, grasshoppers, flies, moths, beetles, caterpillars and small bugs of every description.

The birds nest here and stay all summer to raise their young. Though found coast to coast in all of the U.S. and much of Canada in summer, the bright and tropical-looking yellowthroat is known to surprisingly few people ... until they watch and listen closely. You often find yellowthroats in thick cover near wetlands.

Look for a small, slender bird with a bright yellow throat and chest and black face mask bordered with white on top. Back and wings are olive gray. Females and juveniles have paler yellow throats and lack the black mask. The tail is relatively long compared to the bird's body.

Listen for the yellowthroat's bright and cheery *witchity-witchity-witchity-witch* song. Birds also keep track of one another and warn each other of danger with a harsh *chek* call.



Expect to see yellowthroats in thickets, especially those near marshes and wetlands. The birds are frequent visitors to yards and gardens next to dense, tangled cover.

Create a water garden with plenty of plant life surrounding it to attract yellowthroats and other moisture-loving birds

Did you know that male and female yellowthroats share brood-care duties until the young begin to fledge? Then the male finishes that chore while the female goes off to try a second brood.

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

County Teasers

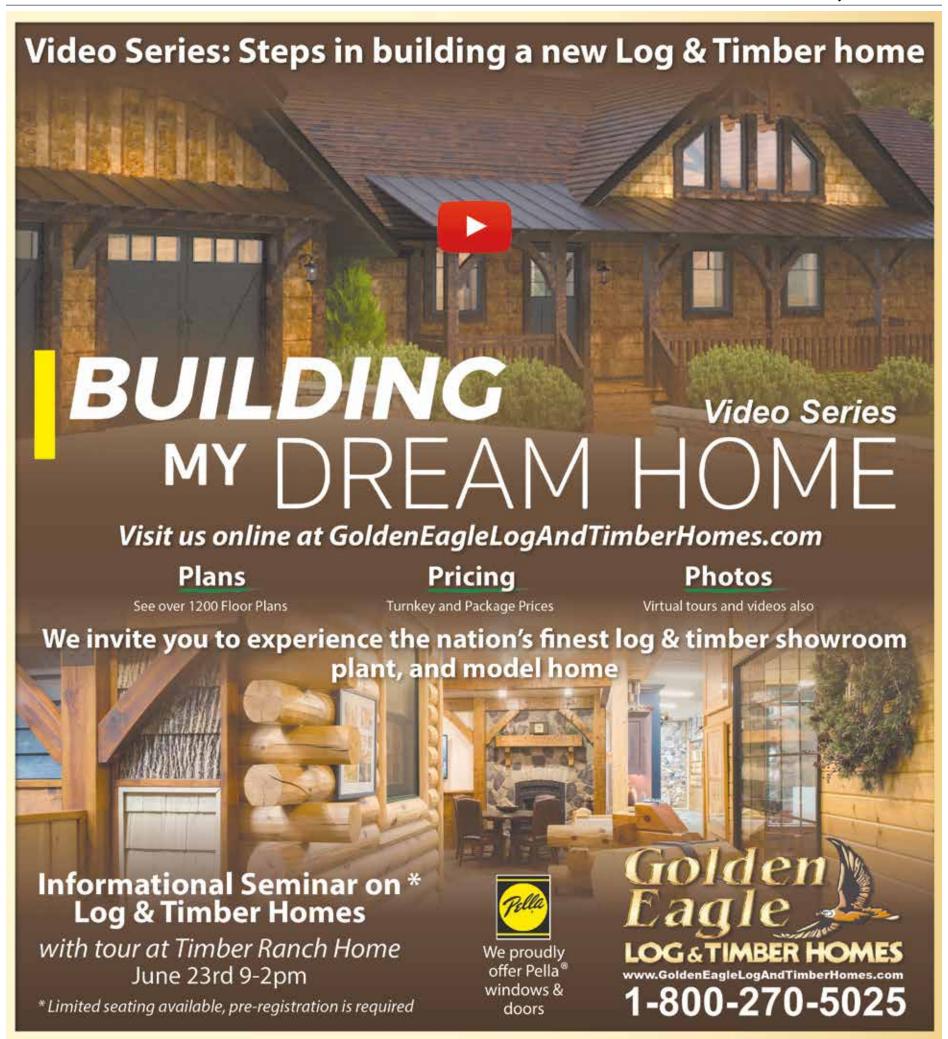
Ashland

Visit Ashland during these great early summer events: Chequamegon Bay Birding & Nature Festival at the Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center, Ashland, May 17-19; House-to-House Garage Sale in Ashland, May 19; Apostle Islands Inline Marathon on beautiful Madeline Island, June 16; Superior Vistas Bike Tour at Thompson's West End Park, Washburn, June 23.

www.visitashland.com

OWO Price County

Muskellunge, Musky, Muskie...no matter how you say it, the season for this amazing fish species opens in Price County on May 26, 2018. According to the Wisconsin DNR, there are 35 premiere Muskellunge waterbodies located in Price County. Request a free county map, featuring lakes & landings, by calling 715-339-4505. Start planning your Price County fishing experience today!



ASHLAND AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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Start your summer in Ashland, Wisconsin

shland is nestled along the south shore of Lake Superior's Chequmegon Bay and boasts a unique mix of historic charm and modern convenience. Ashland offers endless outdoor activities, including hiking, biking, boating, kayaking, canoeing, skiing, sledding, snowshoeing, fishing, camping and summer events. The Lake Superior Waterfront Trail is a continuous path linking Maslowski Beach on the west to Bayview Park on the east.

As the county seat of Ashland County and the commercial hub of the Chequamegon Bay region, Ashland is proud to provide visitors with a variety of restaurants and shops. Ashland is situated at the junction of U. S. Highway 2 and Wisconsin State Highway 13.

Ashland is home to a full-service, 121slip marina, conveniently located in the center of town. Head out on the world's largest freshwater lake offering world-class smallmouth bass fishing; enjoy breathtak-



ing views of sunsets on tree-lined shores and then dock within easy walking distance of Ashland's historic Main Street business district. Explore unique shops, galleries and specialty stores where you'll find everything from German cookies and chocolates and gourmet delights, to a variety of locally owned stores with gifts, clothing for the entire family and local art.

Ashland features a wide variety of mouthwatering mealtime choices, including fresh Lake Superior fish. Check out one of Ashland's locally owned restaurants for home-cooked specialties or sip an award winning craft-brewed beer with your meal. The community's pride in its rich history is evident in its 19 vibrant murals highlighting a particular aspect of Ashland's colorful past, depicting subjects ranging from the city's lumberjacks and military veterans to its railroads, storefronts and former massive ore dock.

Since 2005, Ashland has been known as the "Historic Mural Capital of Wiscon-

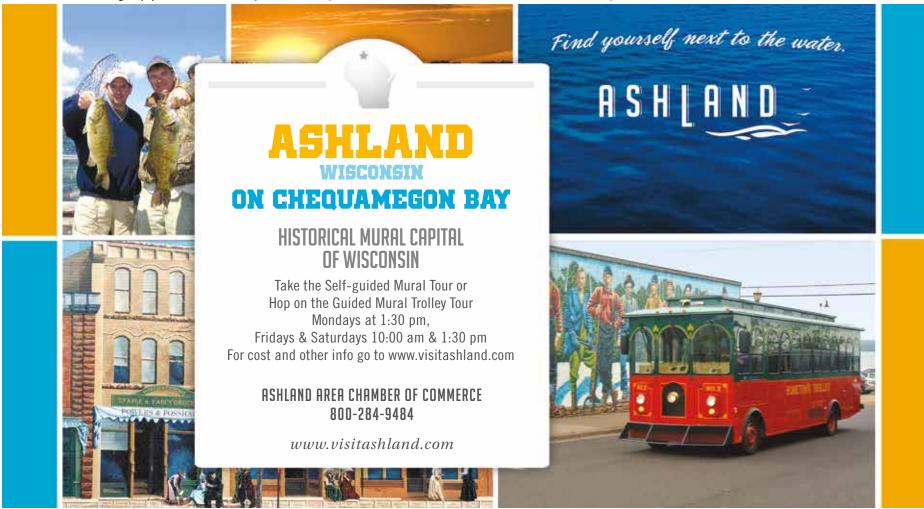


sin," making the city a year-round public art destination. Mural Tours on the Trolley will be every Friday and Saturday at 10 am and 1:30 pm and at 1:30 pm on Mondays from June 23rd through September 8th. Pick-up is on the East side of the Bay Area Civic Center.

Ashland is a great jumping off point for both the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore and the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest. Some of the most spectacular waterfalls in the entire state are located in Ashland County. Copper Falls State Park near Mellen features three scenic waterfalls.

Swimming beaches and parks are available along U.S. Highway 2 at Bayview Park on Ashland's east end, at Kreher Park and RV campground near the base of the former ore dock in the center of town, and Maslowski Beach at the west end of Ashland which features an artesian well with fresh cold spring water bubbling up all

CONTINUED ON PAGE 32



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JOHN CLER

Rich in Richland County

A float trip to treasure

hose that have visited Richland County will remember that it is extremely hilly and wooded. This is the heart of Wisconsin's Driftless Area. While the rest of the Badger State was glaciated four times in the past two million years, the southwestern portion of the state escaped these land changing events each time. Geologists call evidence left by glaciers "drift," leading to this area earning the "Driftless Area" title. Glaciers do detour around small portions of land sometimes, but this area is unique due to its extensive size.

The last glacial period carved out the Great Lakes and left most of Wisconsin covered with thousands of inland lakes. Richland County, on the other hand, has no natural lakes. It is blessed however, with a large network of streams flowing through nearly every steep valley. Most of these streams contain a good number of trout, attracting trout enthusiasts from near and far. The county's southern border is the Wisconsin River, which also offers great fishing opportunities.

The Wisconsin River has been a paddling destination for years, acclaimed by both canoe and kayak enthusiasts. The Lower Wisconsin Riverway boasts lots of landings for putin and take-out, as well as ample sand bar camping when the water is low. There are also a good number of outfitters along the Riverway that are able to help with craft rental and vehicle placement. First-time visitors to the Riverway

Kayaking the natural bridge on Pine River near Rockbridge, WI. PHOTO COURTESY OF REAL TIZZY PHOTOGRAPHY

should be aware that glass bottles are not allowed.

The Pine River runs the length of Richland County, eventually emptying into the Wisconsin River. The Pine is a trout stream in its upper reaches and adds smallmouth bass and channel catfish to the fish population as it moves south. This river was used by a few local paddlers not afraid to portage over or around the numerous logjams that interfered with smooth water travel.

In 2013, local entrepreneur Mark McCauley opened Pine River Paddle and Tube after cleaning a portion of the Pine River of its logjams. He began offering canoe, kayak and tube rentals, as well as transport services along the river. Visitors and local residents "discovered" the Pine River and began exploring its reaches by water.

Southwest Partners, a non-profit community action group, also recognized the potential of the Pine River. Members of this organization began clearing more miles of river and improving landing areas for users of the river. They soon realized that assistance would be needed to keep the river open and make access to the river attractive to visitors. Southwest Partners joined with the City of Richland Center and Richland County in trying to secure grant funding for these improvements.

Knowles – Nelson Stewardship grant funding was secured from the State of Wisconsin to improve landing areas.



These improvements included installation of canoe / kayak friendly piers, plus trails and stairways leading to and from the landing areas. Project work was completed by local volunteers.

Several record setting floods over the past several years allowed the group to qualify for funding from the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA). Grant funds were used to hire a local contractor to remove trees from the river and trees likely to fall in the river in the near future. In total, a bit more than \$500,000 of grant money was secured to make the Pine River an attractive river to float.

Whether you prefer a two hour, day-long or overnight float trip, Richland County is a great place to paddle. See you on the River!

John Cler is a retired principal and science teacher residing in Richland County. He and his wife, Vickie, have two grown daughters, three grandchildren and a black lab that keep them on the move.

JOHN LUTHENS

Canoeing the Bois Brule River Experience Wisconsin's Douglas County gem

long the lakes and flowage of Wisconsin's diverse watershed, the silent glide of a canoe is in tight competition with ribbons of motorized, splashing recreation. But when it comes to a historic river beneath the towering pines on one of the most wild rivers in Wisconsin, paddling the Bois Brule in Douglas County is arguably the gold medal standard.

The Boise Brule is fifty miles of pristine waterway, from bubbling, conifer swamps to the wide, sandy flats of Lake Superior. Gin-clear pools and rocky rapids harken back to a time when fur-traders and Native Americans paddled the Bois Brule in birch-bark canoes along the corridor between the Mississippi River and the Apostle Island trading outposts along Superior's southern shore.

Birch-bark canoes may have given way

to plastic and graphite, but the Brule still holds fast to the scenic glory of days gone by. For silent-sport adventurers seeking to capture rare memories of whispering pines and singing water, here's a brief snapshot into launching a timeless, Brule River voyage.

Bridges, Landings and Lodges:

Sitting on the edge of the sand barrens near Lake Nebagamon, Stone's Bridge is a famous starting point, with native white pines and the orchid smell of moss-laden bogs hanging in the northern air. Nesting eagles watch from above, while cedar waxwings and white-throated sparrows flit in the alders below.

The upper Brule is sandy, sparkling, and holds springs bubbling up from the bottom in artesian clouds of white. Trout fishing from a drifting canoe using small, floating flies and golden spinners is especially productive, with native brook trout swirling beneath sunken logs and along the overhung banks.

Further downstream and firmly anchored in a plunging drop along County Highway B, the Winneboujou Bridge Landing is an easy, half-day's paddle from Stone's. The landing offers a graveled parking area and short portage to the river. Lodges and clubs, some dating to the 1800s, are hidden along the river's banks. Among these historic treasures is the famed Cedar Island compound that once served as a summer White House and trout-fishing retreat for President Calvin Coolidge.

Dropping sharply into rocky, whitewater excitement, the stretch below Winneboujou offers plunging rapids and tree-lined ridges. The Brule River State Forest Campground sits along the tail of one of the



Floating the timeless waters of the Bois Brule
River. (PENCIL SKETCH BY DANIEL LUTHENS)

longest rapids, providing an excellent place to camp directly along the river. Native brown trout lurk in the pools between riffles – a golden-spotted opportunity for an angling-minding adventurer to stretch out from the canoe for an evening of wading and casting.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 33



The author's granddaughter Sophia Aguilar shows off a perch she caught. Teaching kids to fish and enjoy fishing is the future of our sport

YURK, FROM PAGE 4

Kids travel on their stomach. Make sure you have plenty of water, juice and snacks in the boat. If you stopped on the way to the lake for breakfast, have a sandwich for them for lunch. Tell them they are having a picnic in the boat. They will love it. When the fishing slows down, you can ward off boredom with a bottle of water and/or a pack of peanuts. It fills time for them until the fish start hitting again.

Have them use simple, but effective equipment. I keep four spincasting outfits for kids. When they get a bit older and have a little more coordination, I introduce them to spinning gear. I will then spend the first 15 or 20 minutes of the day teaching them how to use it and then practice before we start fishing. Nothing is more frustrating to kids than not being able to handle the equipment we give them.

Taking kids fishing is great fun and a joy for us older fishermen. It is also a necessity. The future of our sport demands we take kids fishing. If we don't teach them, who

There is something very satisfying in introducing another generation to the sport we love. The future of fishing is with the young boys and girls we teach to fish and who will later enjoy the sport as much as we do.

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.

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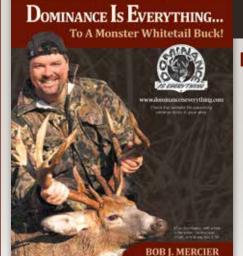
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Jim Servi is a freelance writer who spends every opportunity he can in the great outdoors with his wife and three boys. Contact Jim at jimservi10@gmail.com.





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LEE GATZKE

The Adapting Whitetail

Observations from a half-century of hunting deer

aving hunted deer for over fifty years, I've noticed how they have adapted to my hunting methods. When I began hunting, it was illegal to hunt from a tree or elevated platform. Deer then had little experience with danger from above. When that rule was eliminated, hunters quickly discovered that deer were vulnerable when we hunted them from trees because they rarely looked up and saw us. If we played the wind right and remained quiet, our movement would go unnoticed. We had a newfound advantage and success rates for hunters soared, especially bowhunters. Within a few years, deer caught on and began scanning the treetops for us. They adapted.

A shift in deer population took place in the 1960s that saw their numbers blossom in agricultural areas and shrink in the Northwoods. A maturing forest in the north supported fewer deer while they adapted to "living under the nose" of humans in the agricultural southern two-thirds of Wisconsin. Deer thrived here and hunters followed.

Hunter numbers, especially bowhunters, grew rapid-



ly along with the deer herd and before long meat poles in agricultural areas were sagging. Deer quickly discovered that moving about in daylight in this more open terrain was hazardous to their health and they changed their habits once again to survive.

In my early years of hunting in agricultural country, "prime time" to hunt had always been the first and last hour of daylight. It was a no-brainer to be on your stand then to see deer. Deer noticed the uptick in human activity into their space during these times and became more nocturnal and/or cautious to avoid contact with hunters. Now I'm seeing more mid-day deer movement during hunting season as the years go by because the deer have discovered they rarely encounter hunters then. We're back at the truck having lunch or taking a nap. The deer have changed to adapt to our pattern of hunting early and late in the day and we have been slow to catch on to this.

Years ago I found a honey-hole; it was an in-woods water source. A trail camera placed there revealed deer were coming in to drink there at all times of the day. I hunted the spot hard during the bow and gun seasons as long as it wasn't frozen over. The first few years I was seeing a lot of deer there, but in subsequent years things tapered off dra-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 29



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MIKE FOSS

Grin & Bear It

Cabin fever banter is what the doctor ordered

ecovering from foot surgery, it almost kills me that I can't be in the field beginning to at least break-in and lay out our bear baiting routes. We'll be baiting on the QuietKat electric bike, but not yet. It's April, and the unending pounding of snow would not allow us to access to the backcountry of Bayfield County anyway to reach the areas that will eventually hold both bears and hunters on cool, sunny September days.

The electric bike will be a huge game changer, allowing us to approach bait stations and big bears with much more stealth. Other OWO writers have the bike now, hunting hill country for gobblers in Grant County near the Mississippi River in Wisconsin's southwest. Good for them. The Kat will be here soon enough, and I will be riding with the wild things in the field by early May.

Feeling sorry for myself, I'm also thinking how this combined illness of bear addiction and cabin fever cannot be any stronger with the only known cure being another full dose of the bear season hanging out there on the horizon. And then the phone rings. I'm always glad to hear from On Wisconsin Outdoors readers who follow our bear hunts. They have their questions or are seeking advice, often as a first time bear hunter. This call does not disappoint.

As the conversation unfolds, an ulterior motive begins to surface. The question is a good one: "How far should I place my bait stations away from another hunter?" The caller has drawn a Wisconsin bear tag and has access to 100 private acres surrounded by other private properties. I explain that many variables go into making that decision: the population of bears in the area; are you targeting a specific bear? and the time and money the hunter wants to invest in filling a tag are only a few.

I have captured on camera bears visiting one bait station and then another five miles distant and have had bears at one station never visit the bait just one mile away. Simply put, I believe a bear picks his territory and bait station of choice based on where it feels safe, now. By mid-August, you will know what bears are committed to what bait stations. As a rule, if working two sites, keep one at least three miles from the other. You do not want to give a bear you're targeting a reason to visit the site you're not on when the season



The right dose of medicine for Mike Foss means baiting bears and seeing what big surprises are on the trail cameras.

starts.

The phone call turned comical. I could faintly hear whispers of one hunter asking questions to the caller until I was certain that two people were on one line. "Why don't you just put your phone on speaker?" I asked in mid-sentence. There was a pause, then laughter. I was talking to two tag holders, and very good friends, who will hunt together.

It became obvious that these two Wisconsin boys were not only close, but competitive. As I listened to their rips and jabs, I knew that this is what hunting is really about - true camaraderie. Now I was part of it. They accepted and valued my opinion almost as if I was going to be part of their hunt. I appreciated it.

The conversation continued until I learned that a monster bear frequented the 100 acres. Hence, the question and discussion regarding how many bait stations should be started and how far apart to place on the property. One hunter was adamant that only one bait station should be placed, with who would sit with that bait, and when to be established by coin toss. Ultimately, I was left the task of making the decision so that no fingers would be pointed at one another. They could both blame me.

"Place two bait stations on that property as far as possible apart and hunt them at the same time," I suggested. "If one of you shoots a bear, abandon the stand. But place back-up bait stations ready to fire up as far apart as possible."

These hunters thought I was doing them a favor. For me, simple participation in a hunt yet to be played out was the next best thing to being in the field.

Let the fun begin! **W**

Mike Foss was born and raised in Washburn, Wisconsin (Bayfield County) and spent years as a professional bear and deer guide. He now assists Robert Haas Northern and Northern Wisconsin Outfitters. Connect with NWO at 715.373.0127 or northwiout@att.net.

BOB'S BEAR BAIT, LLC

Baiting Bear Tips to fill your tag

permit for the 2018 season! Baiting bear is not as easy as one may think. There are many factors when it comes to securing a successful site. Careful research and planning is required. The following are some tips to ensure bear will come to your site:

ongratulations to all who have received a bear

- 1. Always use the same path when approaching and leaving the site in order to minimize your scent.
- 2. Carry non-scented wipes to wash your hands after handling bait and before using your camera or
- 3. Measure several logs or make measured marks on trees near your bait pile. This helps you estimate the size of the bears caught on your camera.
- 4. When starting your site, it's good practice to use a call lure or scent attractant. Bears can smell further than a mile away!

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DICK ELLIS

Winter Break-Out, Wisconsin Style Walleye run, turkey hunt offer cure

ore than anything else, Wisconsin's trade with Missouri 42 years ago of wild turkey for ruffed grouse brought with it one more reason to look forward to spring. Walleye runs on major veins across the state would no longer be the only main event announcing the big winter breakout for hunters and anglers. A spring turkey season now also lay on the horizon.

For decades, that's exactly what we get - a field and stream spring doormat leading to the open water fishing season and paradise again. Unless, of course, crabby Mother Nature doesn't like the winter break-out thing and brings her attitude to the party. Like this year.

I landed on the Wolf River at New London with brothers Steve and John Ellis based on the reports of longtime friend and Johnny's Little Shoppe of Bait owner John Faucher (920-982-4802 or www.johnnyslittleshoppeofbaitcom). Johnny, and countless other Wolf men, were on to limits of eater walleyes and releasing loads of the egg-swollen females that keep this fishery so healthy.

The word was out. On the day we launched, empty trailers by the scores filled the public launch and hundreds of fishermen worked the Wolf from shore or boats up and downriver. Reports on the water were that fishing had slowed, and that's what we found with the exception of a

24-inch female spitting eggs caught and released, a bonus smallie, and some fish lost. But who could care? We were fishing on open water in mid-April.

Already spoiled, John Ellis and I declined Crabby Mother Nature's invitation to sit in a blizzard in Grant County in an attempt to fill a turkey tag. Instead, we altered plans to land on the eve of John's final day of season 1, and stayed for my first day of season 2. The plan allowed each of us one day of hunting and one day of acting as OWO camera man, in blue skies and temperatures in the 60s. Now that's a 48-hour breakout, with the promise of one more overthe-counter tag purchased for a gobbler hunt in May.

For season 2, we were joined by good friend Todd "Cookie" Cook, a 25-year Dodge County Conservation Congress Delegate and Chairman of the Wisconsin Waterfowl Committee. As a cherry on the cake, we would use the OWO QuietKat in the field for the first time. The rugged, electric, fat-tire bike is a riot to use and a great field tool, but I have to give it up to OWO bear expert Mike Foss for baiting duties in May. I wasn't giving it up without ample southwestern Wisconsin field mud painting it. Hopefully, the QuietKat's virgin Wisconsin voyage would also include giving Mr. Gobbler and our equipment a trailered ride out to the truck.



Todd Cook of Horicon will transport his Grant County gobbler and equipment from the field with the OWO QuietKat and trailer

"Cookie" took care of that. As John and Todd worked a field with their calls and decoys, a muffled shotgun report carried over the terrain 600 yards to my own stand. I put the binoculars on the scene to watch the beautiful Tom recovered just two hours into the hunt. Using a Winchester load that boasts a long-distance wallop, Todd had dropped the bird preparing to exit the scene in its tracks at 50 yards.

The turkey population is alive and well. John and I never pulled the trigger, but not for a lack of birds. Each of us declined shots on Toms that were tucked in so close to other birds on the decoy that hitting two was a sure thing. We also found a bonus. We use the spring turkey hunt to listen for crowing pheasants and determine if it's worthwhile to return in fall to hunt wild roosters. We heard cocks crowing all day, both days. We'll be back.

And that, is your break out report. Wisconsin style.





Fox Valley Retriever Club

Training You To Train Your Retriever



TOM MUELLER

Training the Retriever Pup Implementing control

retriever that's obedient is in control and a retriever that's in control is obedient. Obedience and control go hand in hand. Go to any hunt test and you'll see many fine examples of retrievers that are obedient to a T and very much in control. This is in spite of the fact that they are excited and energized because they know they're going to get a chance to retrieve.

Most of the handlers that run their dogs in hunt tests are avid hunters. They know that when they're hunting in a boat, blind or in a field, the one thing they shouldn't have to worry about is their retriever. When they give their dog a command, most likely it will obey. The question is, "How did they get there?"

If you've been following along in previous issues, you'll see that a pup's training should start right away - as soon as you get it home. Usually the pup is around eight weeks old. Right from the beginning, you start teaching and conditioning it to hold onto a dummy and deliver it to hand. Along with that, you start teaching your obedience commands and conditioning it to respond properly to them. At one point you have to start reinforcing those commands and insisting that it holds onto a dummy and delivers it to hand. Prior to this, the work you've done with your retriever pup has been all fun and games. Now with your puppy being a few months older, you're going to start adding some



structure to your training by starting a training routine or sequence.

Typically, my training sequence starts with working on obedience by drilling the dog first on heel for several days, then on having it do heel/sit drills for several days. After that a heel/sit/come here sequence is worked on for several days. While teaching this structured obedience, it's most important that you instill control by keeping it on a leash or a longline while doing these drills so you can make it comply with your commands. After its daily obedience drill, you continue having it work on holding onto a dummy and delivering to hand.

Each lesson should last no longer than 10 to 20 minutes. It's better if you can do a lesson twice a day. Commands are to be spoken only once. Doing that will condition your puppy or young dog to respond immediately to the command. If your dog

A group of FVRC members teaching "sit" while being distracted by other dogs.

doesn't give you the response right away, you have to make it respond without giving it any more commands. Don't forget the rewards, petting, praising, and food. It's still important to let a young dog know it did the right thing.

Many of the new Fox Valley Retriever Club members that join me for the puppy and obedience class that I instruct have dogs that are already somewhat unruly. For whatever reason they didn't start working with their pups right away. When they start coming to these sessions, these young dogs - now anywhere from four to nine months of age - have already learned they don't always have to obey a command and they can ignore their owners if they want to.

Most of the retrievers that we have today are extremely high energy dogs. Their focus as puppies and young dogs is smelling, running around, and hunting and retrieving for themselves. Left to do and be whatever they want when they want, with little or no training being started at an early age, they can become a furry ball of frustration as they mature.

Tom Mueller 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.

SUZETTE CURTIS

Recipes With Suzette

Cooking with compound butters

n past columns, I've mentioned that the best way to enjoy fresh fish is to prepare it with just three ingredients – butter, salt and pepper. While I still believe that's true, I also still continue to experiment with my own recipes and cooking techniques. My latest endeavor has involved the use of compound butters. They are so easy to make (these recipes are each prepared in the same manner), and they lend a marvelous flavor to the fish. Enjoy!

Tarragon Shallot Butter

- 1½ sticks unsalted butter
- 3 shallots, very finely chopped
- 1 T dried tarragon
- 1/4 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce

Lemon Dill Butter

- 1½ sticks unsalted butter
- 1 T dried dill weed
- 2 teaspoons lemon juice

Basil Garlic Butter

- 1 1/2 sticks unsalted butter
- 2 cloves garlic, grated *
- 1 T dried basil
- *Grate the garlic using a microplane set over the butter bowl to capture the juices as well.

Parsley Butter

- 1 ½ sticks unsalted butter
- 2 T dried parsley
- 2 teaspoons lemon juice

Roasted Red Pepper Butter

- 1 ½ sticks unsalted butter
- ¼ to ½ cup roasted red peppers, pureed*
- Salt & pepper to taste

*I use roasted red peppers from a jar (which should be **well** drained), but you can roast your own and puree (after removing skin, seeds and membranes) once cooled.

Directions for Compound Butters:

In a medium sized bowl, whip butter until light and fluffy. Add remaining ingredients and blend well. Using waxed paper or parchment paper, roll butter into a log. Seal ends of log and freeze for 12 to 24 hours.

Remove butter from freezer and let stand at room temperature for about 30 minutes before using. Cut into slices and place atop fish while it's cooking and/or as a finishing touch when serving.

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.

DENNY MURAWSKA

Awakening the Bear Herbs of spring send writer scavenging

It is time for the porky, mangy, denned-up bear to awaken. That bear is me. Like any other right-thinking beast, I envision green shoots and the bounty nature provides in abundance. Seed catalogs come way too early, but stir in me a foraging instinct I have possessed since childhood. It may be too early for my garden, but it will soon be time for scrounging the fields and forests for what they provide in abundance.

I am always amazed at what all stays green under the snow and ice. Most of these mosses and ground huggers are no good for eating, but that will soon change. Early on, spikes of cattails thrust upwards to the sun. I pull them up so as not to break off the tender blanched bases. Boiled and salted with butter, they taste very much like asparagus. As ferns emerge, the coiled fiddleheads emerge and are a delicacy relished around the world. As time goes on, the plant kingdom marches forth with more and more choices, each with its prime time for harvest.

As the days warm a bit, wild onions sway with the grasses. These are potent, and much like garlic, a few go a long ways. If you are lucky enough to locate a patch of watercress in a spring-fed creek, you are in for one of the healthiest treats in nature. Like an aquatic spinach, the flavor is out of this world. I prefer to cook it for one reason only: I don't even like to say the words "parasitic flukes" that can invade your liver, but yes, do not eat it raw.

Another wild spinach is violets. As pretty as they are, the leaves can be used like spinach, and all parts of the plant are edible. What

a lovely garnish it makes as a creamed dish with its purple flowers garnishing the goodly mound of vegetable.

What is a weed but a plant growing where we do not want it for some reason? Young dandelions are a tad bitter, but mixed in a salad, just like endive. Another lawn weed is plantain. We have all seen it with its broad leaves and spiked seed head. Young ones can be eaten raw, older ones can be boiled. Lots of vitamins in this one.

Mint is all over, particularly in moist areas. It makes a great tea. Your cats will love you for it, since catnip is a mint and they don't seem to be picky about what type of mint it is. Make sure to pick enough and learn how to make a mojito.

Finally, at the edge of summer, a roadside weed known as Lamb's Quarter fills the land. It has a slight garlic taste and is perfect to add to salads. Lamb's Quarter is easy to identify, and you can pick the leaves for a long time. This plant loves bike trails and roadsides.

To denigrate these healthy plants by ignoring them or calling them "weeds" is a shame. Learn them by shape and habitat and name. There is a deep satisfaction to adding these to your diet of beer and brats, thinning your blood for the coming summer, and awakening your hibernating soul again.

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. Website: www.growforagecookferment.com

GATZKE, FROM PAGE 25

matically. Deer were still drinking there, but not when I occupied any of the stands surrounding the waterhole. They learned to circle the place at a safe distance before coming in, came in at night, or abandoned it altogether. My sightings there plummeted and I realized they were on to me. Nowadays when I find such a spot I'm a lot more cautious about when and how often I hunt it.

These are a few examples I've seen of how deer have adapted to my hunting methods and learned to survive while living "under my nose." Avoiding the human predator is an ongoing process deer undertake to survive and adapt to how we all hunt them. We need to be aware of this to recognize how they react to our methods. We can change our tactics when necessary to try to stay one step ahead of them in order to hunt them successfully.

Lee Gatzke is co-owner of NextBuk Outdoors, producers of tactical hunting videos. In grade school, 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.



JERRY DAVIS

A Gathering Challenge Hunting Wisconsin's wild foods

ost wild foods have their own season, but every season has something worth gathering by picking, digging or cutting. It's not always easy to find morels, ramps, raspberries or good, solid shagbark hickory nuts. The search is part of the game, part of the excitement and part of the adventure.

Gathering fresh isn't always getting greens. Yes, there's watercress on New Year's Day, walnuts on Labor Day and a few evergreen boughs for table decorations on Christmas morning. There are spices, herbs, vegetables and dessert out there.

In most cases wild food seasons are dictated by phenology, not legislative decrees. Ginseng root for tea is an exception because permission must be gathered first, licenses purchased and other rules to follow.

In some states gathering what is thought to be free could cost a bundle if the gathering commences on public property and then the urge to sell a motherlode of morels overwhelms. Use nature's foods or give them to others, but don't sell items collected on state property without first checking with the warden.

No gathering on public property should destroy the plant. In other words, don't dig small trees for landscaping or take home a few orchids or a prairie trillium.

With all plants, fungi and animals, identity is the starting point. Don't try to amass the names and identities of all plants in a region. Those additional identities can build as experiences and desires increase. But going after wild carrots does require knowing some look-alikes, for some of



Wild raspberries come in various colors and are usually an early bumper berry crop.

these are deadly.

Wild asparagus, the same species as garden and growers' varieties, is a roadside stem vegetable. It can be expensive to pay for the gasoline to drive miles for enough to cover a slice of toast.

Part of the exhilaration of picking morels explains the excitement of gathering in general. It's an excuse to be outdoors hiking, in this case during spring and after a long, sometimes boring, winter.

Leeks and chives are usually available for the picking or digging at this time. Check



Hen-of-the-woods mushrooms is a real find near oak trees, even dead oaks.

the identity carefully and use the smell test.

Summer begins the berry seasons, some spices and herbs and a lot of greens, beginning with lawn dandelions and garlic mustard. Make sure any wild plant is collected in the wild, away from where chemicals have been sprayed for any purpose. That may also be a reason to avoid some roadside plants.

While raspberries (earliest) and blackberries are two of the most common and highly sought after berries, don't overlook

CONTINUED ON PAGE 34





SKYE GOODE

Snake Hunting Wisconsin

Mom's game of hide & seek teaches sons respect, love of the outdoors

ummer used to be a time when I remained indoors with the air conditioning on. In recent years, my boys and I developed a new summer activity that satisfies our need to pursue prey and go outdoors. I call it "Snake Hide and Seek."

Please note that most reptiles in Wisconsin are protected or not allowed to be taken into possession. There are many important guidelines to follow if you plan to take your kids on a reptile expedition, which I will lay out in this article.

Snake hunting is free, requires no special gear, training or tools, and it can be done rain or shine. Snake hunting is best done in hot weather. Keep this in mind outdoors and take plenty of water with you.

The boys and I usually begin hunting mid-day by driving the backroads and looking for snakes crossing the roads. While hunting for snakes, we often see and rescue turtles that are trying to lay eggs in the middle of busy gravel roads by moving



A skink discovered under a rock in a waterway.

them off to the side. Snakes often cross these same roads and, unfortunately, many of them don't make it to the other side.

We like to look for waterways that are along dirt roads with lots of big rocks



The author's son with a garter snake found in the rocks behind him.

around the culvert or lining the ditch. These areas seem to be the best for finding many different species of snakes in one area. Checking under rocks is the best way to find hidden critters. Several important things to remember are to lift each rock individually, don't flip it, so as not to crush any animal underneath, and to place the rock back down exactly as you found it, as to not disturb the habitat.

Snakes can often be found curled up under rocks and caught before they can uncurl. We have found over a dozen different species of snakes in our area of Clark County, including hognose, pine/fox, ring-neck, red belly, and northern water snakes. My son loves to identify them with his snake identification field book. Among the features we look for are markings, size, signs of eating and imminent shedding. We usually take a few pictures and then gently place the snake under the same rock that we found it. It's important to handle the snake gently so as not to stress it out, and never remove a snake from the area you found it, as you could disrupt the ecosystem as well as violate a law regarding possession.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 34





RON STRESING

Guild Guns

Working man's shotguns, made one part at a time

"guild gun" is defined as made from parts manufactured by a group of small companies and then assembled into a finished product for sale. From the 1850s to the late 1930s, the American market saw hundreds of thousands of high quality firearms and parts imported from factories in and around Birmingham, England and Liege, Belgium. The vast majority were made to sell at a "working man's" price point, and were durable, serviceable, firearms. The wood was usually not exhibition grade nor was there any fancy engraving. Checkering on the wood was basic, and any designs on the receivers were scrolled or pressed into the steel. Brand names were often the name of the company who imported the gun, or one made up to sound close to a famous European gun maker. If you couldn't afford a costly Westly-Richards double, a W.Richards gun from a Birmingham consortium was close enough.

These guns showed up in large numbers at the perfect time for the American market. Post-Civil War Americans were working their way west, as the country was settled. Twelve gauge doubles from Belgium market-hunted ducks on the Chesapeake Bay. Sixteen gauge guns harvested squirrels or quail down south or partridge in New England. Many found their way out west, helping to feed and protect families. One example I found pictures of was a Belgian 16 gauge side by side in Montana. The gun traveled there with a family by covered wagon and is still in use today.

An interesting gun I handled myself was one found by



Heirloom 16 gauge guild gun

Photo credit Howard F. Yeager Jr.

a farmer friend inside a wall of his barn while making renovations. The long barreled Belgian 12 gauge gun has a cracked stock, repaired with nails and a piece of sheet metal. The barn was built in the late 1920s and, from the look of the gun, it had not been moved before it was discovered. Another example was a finely crafted .410 "rabbit ear" exposed hammers double a friend in Iowa owns. It has helped feed his family for decades.

Both the English and Belgian operations had things in common. One gun maker cast all the receivers, while others built barrels, stocks, the lock works, etc. Vocational schools, internships, and apprenticeship programs were installed to train future gun makers. Small parts from some of these "job shops" often ended up in higher-end shotguns made by Purdy or Churchill. Along with completed guns, barrels were also exported. Many early American shotguns

were built using Belgian barrels, and the proof marks from English or Belgian makers were regarded world wide as the mark of a safe gun. Unfortunately, Guild gun records, names and numbers are hard to come by. The two World Wars that rampaged across Europe in the last century put many small companies out of business and destroyed most records.

If you find an example of the guild gun maker's work on the used gun rack, look it over carefully. Have a competent gunsmith check the proof marks and chamber length prior to using any modern ammunition in it. Some English 12 gauge and most 16 gauge guns were chambered for 2 1/2" shells

This tradition continues today with the high quality shotguns exported from Turkey. Modern Turkish guns feature a lot of the quality and hand fitting the old-time guns had. These shotguns are also offered in a number of prices and grades, everything from a basic "working man's gun" up to higher grades, with fine engraving and gorgeous wood. It's nice to see an old firearms manufacturing tradition still alive and well.

Special thanks to Howard F. Yeager Jr. and Ken from Bills Sporting Goods in Lomira for information.

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.

ENGBERG, FROM PAGE 13

Have an assortment of jigs in different sizes, colors and shapes to experiment with and see what the walleyes prefer. Keep trying different hues until you find what the fish want. Plastics (try Berkley Gulp or the Walleye Assassin) can be deadly during the spring, alone or dressed with a medium or large fathead minnow. If the fish are biting lightly, you may want to add a stinger hook to your jig.

Wading this time of year can be very effective as can slipping the current in a boat while vertical jigging. Try to fish the low light periods when fish move shallow to feed. Big female walleyes will often move shallow to feed after dark or in the middle of the night depending on the moon phase. Fan casting an area with a shallow running crankbait (Mann's Jerkbait or Rapala Husky Jerk) in natural colors (black/white, perch, or

blue/white) is also worth trying. Use a stop-'n-go retrieve while twitching the bait now and then. Whatever presentation you use, be sure to use a very slow retrieve because the fish are not going to chase your bait when the water is cold.

If fishing from a boat, slip the current or slowly drift downriver while vertical jigging. Keep your line as vertical as possible so that you can feel the light tap or tick of a walleye and the river's bottom. The walleyes are always close to the bottom, so tap it gently as you move downriver.

Besides the Mississippi and Wisconsin rivers, the Wolf, Fox, Rock, Crayfish, Baraboo and Pecatonica rivers are also good for catching walleyes during spring spawning season.

Contact Gary Engberg at 608.795.4208 or gengberg@garyengbergoutdoors.com, or visit garyengbergoutdoors.com.

ASHLAND, *FROM PAGE 20* year long.

The city also boasts the Chequamegon Bay Golf Course, an 18-hole, par 72 course, open to the public. Prentice Park, the largest of Ashland's parks, is a shady, secluded area, perfect for picnicking. It encompasses 100 acres and offers refreshing cold water from an artesian well, hiking trails, viewing platforms, a playground, and they offer camping to tents and small campers.

When it's time to rest, you'll find just the right lodging establishment in Ashland to fit your needs. From charming B&Bs and fine hotels to family owned motels. Relax in comfort with a lakeside view or go for a dip in an indoor pool.

No matter the season, the community cordially welcomes visitors to enjoy and explore this shining jewel, crowning the greatest of the Great Lakes.

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SERVI, FROM PAGE 4

Two of the most popular models today are the Can-Am Defender XT HD10 and the Can-Am Maverick Trail DPS 1000. Their versatility is what makes them so appealing. Both are rugged, capable of traversing any terrain that Wisconsin has to offer, yet delivers a remarkably smooth, comfortable ride. These side-by-sides are also flexible, helping to make everyday life more enjoyable. Whether your working on the farm, cutting firewood, working in the garden, out hunting and fishing, busy with one of your many projects, or just taking a ride to visit family and friends, the Can-Am Defender XT HD10 and Maverick Trail DPS 1000 can help.

Defender packages start at \$9,999. The HD10 offers a V-Twin Rotax Engine delivering 72-horsepower for heavy duty work, a chassis with the strength of a pick-up truck, 4-mode traction system, and a beefed-up suspension. Everything down to the seating and storage is designed with the customer in mind to enhance the usability. Maverick Trail packages start at \$10,999. With 800 and 1000 CC and 51 and 75 horsepower options available, you can customize it to your liking. Either way, you'll get exceptional ground clearance and a balanced, 50-inch by 90.6-inch, wheelbase for incomparable maneuverability.

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.

LUTHENS, FROM PAGE 22

The village of Brule springs up a mile below the state park at the U.S. Highway 2 Bridge Landing, only a short hike away from several restaurants and taverns in town. There is a small motel, along with a full-service canoe rental, which makes even the furthest trek on the river quite easy, dropping the canoes and travelers off at any chosen starting point along the river and taking them out at any chosen landing.

With nothing but 20 miles of remote water separating the town of Brule from the waves of Lake Superior, canoe travelers may find themselves making a hard choice when they cross beneath Highway 2: Stay for the night, press on, or portage back up and do the whole thing again.

There is really no wrong decision when floating the Bois Brule.

John Luthens is a freelance, outdoor journalist with decades of Brule River canoeing experience. Feel free to contact him at <u>Luthens@hotmail.com</u> with any questions on planning a northern Wisconsin paddling adventure of your own.





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STUART WILKERSON

Concealed Carry

Automatic Knives

s if the fact that they're really cool was not enough, there are other reasons to purchase an automatic knife, according to Shorty's Shooting Sports owner Mike "Shorty" Govas. "They're practical, concealable, useful, collectible, legal in Wisconsin, and could potentially save your life," he explained.

When most people think of automatic knives, sometimes referred to as "switchblades," the first thing that comes to mind is the traditional Italian-made stiletto, as seen in countless gangster movies, especially those centered around wayward youths. In fact, it was their sinister portrayal in movies that got them banned in many states during the 1950s, including Wisconsin. Never mind the fact that the knives had been in existence and for sale in the United States since, oh for about forever, and were by no means the preferred weapon of crime syndicate members. The outlawing of switchblades was just another example of politicians wanting to look like they were doing "something" to address crime.

To the absolute surprise of no one, the ban had no discernible impact on the crime rate and it only took quick-witted state legislators 50-some years to figure it out and lift the prohibition. Contrary to what some so-called experts have told me at recent gun shows, you do not need a concealed carry permit to carry

Top two automatic knives are modern out-the-fronts available at Shorty's. Bottom is a traditional Italian-style side-opener. After a 50-year absence, they are again legal in Wisconsin.

an automatic knife. Some prohibitions do apply to some people; I'm no lawyer and refer you to Google or an actual attorney for more specific information.

Generally speaking, there are two types of automatic knives, those that open from the side and those that open out the front (OTF). The actions are self-explanatory. The blade of a side folder springs from the side of the knife with a push of a button. A side folder's blade releases far faster than a manual folder. Side openers can be operated with one hand, are great for emergency situations - like cutting a seat belt to free someone trapped in a car – and self defense.

With an OTF knife, the blade comes out the front, as you probably guessed, rather than from the side. Instead of a leaf-type spring, as commonly found on side opening automatic knives, OTFs use coil springs that release and,

more often than not, retract the blade. OTFs share the same self-defense and ease-of-operation attributes of side openers and the blade will generally release quicker than a side folder.

Automatic knives vary vastly in price and quality, Shorty said. Prices range from the tens of dollars to the thousands for high quality, handmade, collector knives with such features as Damascus blades. Some of the least expensive, yet good quality, automatic knives are those made in China. Shorty sells such OTF knives, one of which is from long-time U.S. brand name Schrade Cutlery. All of the OTFs sold at Shorty's Shooting Sports are sturdy, lock up tight and are priced at around \$50.

Mike Wegner, maker of highly acclaimed Cleveland Holsters, which is based at Shorty's, said that automatic knives are a credible self-defense tool. "They're great for distances up to arm's length," he explained. "Like any weapon, they won't do you any good if they're not accessible. You need to be prepared."

"An automatic knife, or any concealed weapon, won't do you any good if it's buried in a purse or deep inside a jacket," Shorty added. "If you're not prepared, you're a sitting duck. Have it in your hand or within easy reach. And be aware of your surroundings!"

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

GOODE, FROM PAGE 31

While snake hunting, we have found other creatures including turtles, skinks, and giant bullfrogs. Wisconsin is a real mixed bag ecosystem, and many different species co-habitat and thrive in our wetlands. Anything you can do with a child in the outdoors will have a profound, long-lasting effect. Teaching children to respect wildlife, be active in the outdoors, and maintain the environment will set the stage for what kind of person they grow up to be in the future.

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.

DAVIS, FROM PAGE 34

the lesser varieties, including elderberries, grapes, mulberries, and even strawberries, blueberries and wild plums.

Throughout summer and fall, some spices and herbs appear. Anyone gathering these food additives needs to do some special preparation, in addition to plant identification.

Autumn brings a superfluity of wild edibles. Mushrooms, at least during ample rainfall, seem to be everywhere. Several unusual-appearing fungi show themselves along with fall's colorful tones.

Involving young folks can help your endeavors. They know how to do internet searches. They can run up and down hills more easily. And they love to eat and try new foods!

Jerry Davis, a Wisconsin native, retired from university biology teaching and now lives in rural lowa County. He applies arts and sciences to writing and enjoying Wisconsin's outdoors. Contact him at sivadjam@mhtc.net.





GARY GREENE

Memories from an Old Hunter Being married to a hunter comes with challenges

y wife Chris overheard a phone conversation between my son Nate and I as we made plans for an upcoming duck hunt. I was using phrases like "need to glass," "deke placement" and "ducks cupping." These are all normal duck hunting terms. When I got off the phone, she asked, "I know you were talking about hunting, but what were those words?" I went on to interpret our hunting lingo for her. Her response was to laugh. Let's say, "enthusiastically." And not with us, but at us. Since that time, with Chris within earshot of us, Nate and I will use an over abundant amount of duck hunting lingo. We might make up a few words, just to tease, or should I say "entertain" her?

My wife is a non-hunter, but she supports my passion for the sport. Never once has she restricted my hunting endeavors. In return, I hope I have never restricted her interests. This is the second marriage for the two of us, and we have found a life that really works beautifully for us.

After almost thirty years of marriage, I was single. Before I met Chris, I used an online dating service to meet women. Online, I never mentioned hunting. I like to think I have more to offer than just "Hunter." On two separate occasions, I met a lady for a first meeting at a coffee shop. When the conversation got around to my Labrador Retrievers, both asked me if I hunt. When I responded,

each woman, without further comment, got out of her chair and proceeded to walk out of the coffee shop. One walked out before we picked up the coffee order.

At our first meeting, when my wife-to-be, Chris, was confronted with me being a "hunter," she did not leave.

But not all is perfect when a non-hunter and a hunter begin a new life together. During one hunt, as Chris walked along to take pictures of our labs retrieving pheasants, I realized, too late, that she did not need to see the end come to a bird that was not cleanly killed with the shot. She has not returned to the hunting field, but graciously after hunts, has taken numerous pictures of Nate, me and our dogs with our harvested waterfowl and pheasants.

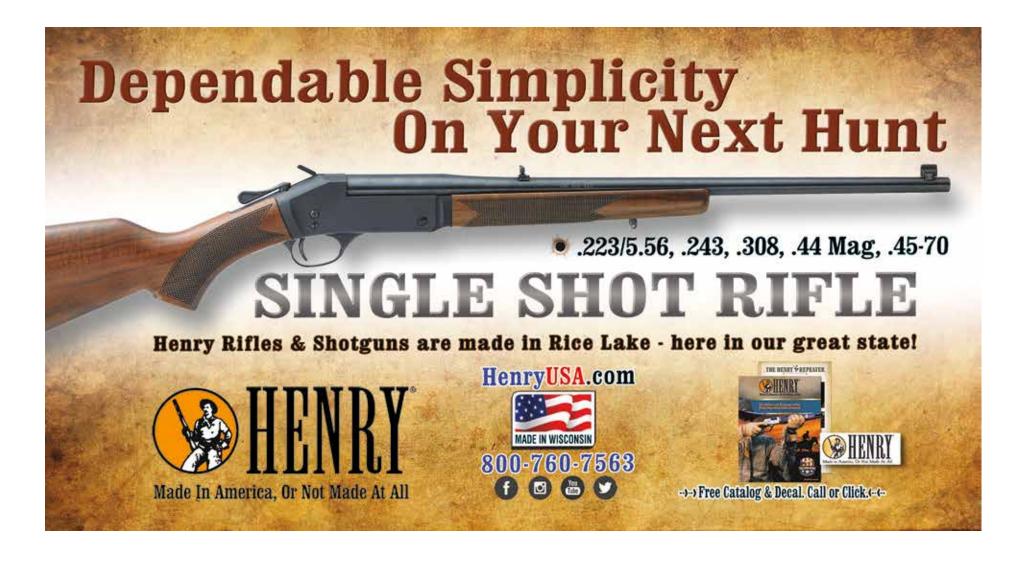
When my Labrador Hershey had her second litter, I planned on keeping only one pup for myself, but Chris persuaded me to keep two. That decision made me think long and hard. When the woman you are dating wants to keep more dogs than you do, you better do everything within your power to keep that woman.

I married her about a year later. 🍪

Gary Greene is a lifelong bird hunter and for years has been a pheasant hunting guide. Gary, his veterinarian wife, Chris, and their five labs live in East Troy. You can contact Gary at ganggreene2002@yahoo.com.



The author with his wife Chris at L.L. Bean in Freeport, Maine.





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