

FREE

On Wisconsin *Outdoors*



PHOTO BY DICK ELLIS

FREE

with the **Dick Ellis Experts**

■ **Fall in to Fall Fun**

With OWOs Explore Wisconsin partners

■ **Autumn Fishing the Badger State**

The OWO experts show you how

■ **Rock River Rescue**

Recovery of a Wisconsin fishery

■ **The Part We Can't Buy**

Those priceless outdoor buddies

■ **Seeking the Straight Flush**

Food sources key to more grouse

■ **Tagging Bigger Bears**

Smart baiting and extreme patience

■ **Finding an Edge**

The deer hunter's ageless journey

■ **From the OWO Gun Cabinet**

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PHIL SCHWEIK

Expanding the Horizon

Finding new, isolated fishing hotspots

I have spent my career finding areas far away from where everyone else fishes. I tell those fishing with me that I don't typically fish "community" locations when guiding. There's no need to hire a guide to fish an area that lots of anglers are familiar with and already fishing.

When people get in my boat, I am going to take them to locations that they would not normally go to on their own. These are great locations that I discovered over a lifetime of paying my dues guiding and fishing. They are out of the way and unknown to the general public.

Most people fish where they see other people working water or where they have already caught fish in the past. This may prove effective, but ethically I won't be moving in on someone that is catching fish. I would rather spend the day searching for fish without success than to move in on someone else with a temporary "claim" staked on any location. But I will find my own fish. And so can you.

Learning new locations is easy, but it takes time and a



Christie Munson and Phil with a Fall Fatty.

willingness to learn. The next time you fish, instead of going to your established hotspot, target several other locations you believe have potential, maybe even with similar characteristics or structure of your spot that already pays

dividends. Or if you're already on that established location and the fish are biting, move to another spot.

Now that's one crazy guide, I hear you saying. But now hear the rationale. If you do scout new water when the fish are inactive on established locations and you don't have any luck, you will more than likely give up on the new spots and not return. But if you expand your horizons when you're catching fish on known productive areas, the bite should also be active elsewhere. The fish are obviously biting and now is the time for you to see what else is out there. Make sense? It should, because I have successfully practiced what I preach for decades.

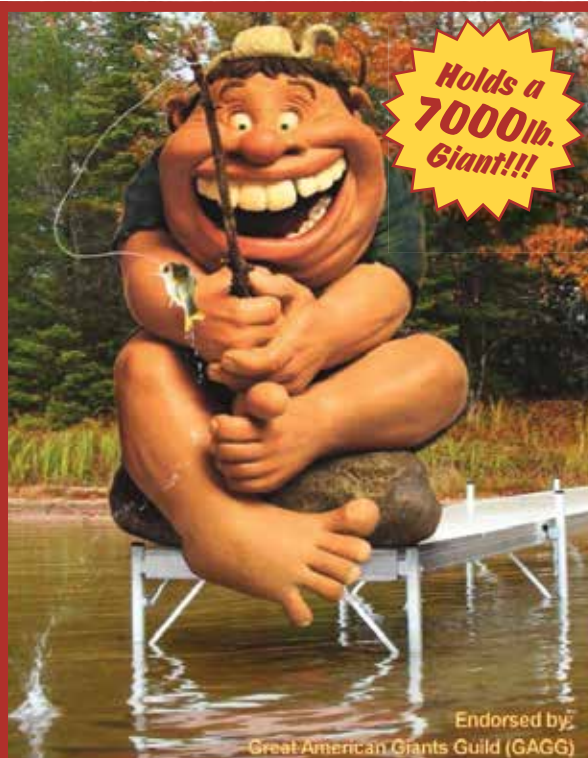
In addition to trying new locations, make sure to adopt new lures or bait and different presentations for your seasonal arsenals. There are definite times of the year when certain baits or lures will out-produce alternatives. Sticking with one particular presentation because it has worked in

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TOM LUBA

Tracking Fall Bass

Like a game of hopscotch

In September water temperature starts moving from warm to cold, triggering both river and lake bass changes as Fall arrives. Sixty degree water usually gets things going. Small fish go on a tear first. But October is when bigger fish move.

Fall fishing is like a game of hopscotch. The bass start moving from deep to shallow and back to deep. Early in the season, large-mouth can still be caught in their deeper summer locations. But as the surface cools, they'll hop shallow and feed heavier before October pushes them deeper again.

Smallmouth get the memo, too, feeding shallow then following bait toward lake basins and river bottoms. On rivers, large-mouth look for deeper lake-like backwaters without current. Smallmouth, however, will migrate from shallow riffles back to deeper main river pools.

In rivers fed by smaller feeders, the fish also migrate to main river depth. Sixty degree water temperature also gets river migrations going. In the main river, they start feeding shallower, moving deep as water cools.

Watch the water temperature. For large-mouth a severe cold front can shut down the shallow bite. A warm up can turn the fish back on until the cold comes to stay. When the fall cold settles, go deeper. Baits like suspending jerkbaits, and lures that cover ground, like spinnerbaits, shallow

cranks and Rat-L-Traps can help you find and pick off early active fish. Once they drop down, deep diving suspending crankbaits can draw them up. Senkos work well over the weed tops. When you locate fish, a tube fished on bottom is also a winner. For plastics, adjust the weight to keep contact with the bottom.

River smallmouth are generally more mobile than their green cousins. Early on, crankbaits can be deadly as they cover a lot of water. As the bass go deeper, plastics become more productive. Since rivers are bait eaters, I emphasize going as light as you can. From one-sixteenth to one-eighth ounce weights will help in limiting snags, but adjust based on conditions and baits.

As fall progresses, I stay with the sixteenth or the eighth with baits like a fluke or a Zoom four-inch Centipede. Now you want the bait to just move along the bottom with the current as the fish will not chase. But they will eat it if it pops them right in the face.


There are times water temperature just doesn't want to let summer go. If it hasn't dropped below sixty when it normally should, I've still found fish moving into the main river. I believe length of day also plays a part in the fall program so you can certainly look for some early arrivals.

For smallies, I like crankbaits until the water drops below 50. The smallmouth bite



September largemouth took this shallow suspending jerkbait off a breakline before the water started to deepen.

on plastics and jigs hold up until the temperature hits 40 or a little below. I like the water a bit warmer for largemouths. One thing to note is how long the water has been at a particular temperature. While the fish may not bite immediately after a severe front, they are generally catchable after the temperature has stabilized.

Fall fishing can run the gamut from late summer warmth to a late October chill. The nice thing is that by watching the weather, bass fishermen can have excellent fishing for both species by hopping along with them when they make their deep to shallow to deep fall seasonal movements. 

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.

MIKE YURK

Bassology

The drop shot game changer

Every now and then I come across a bait that is so good it is a game changer. I found sinking worms fished wacky style to be a game changer. It changed the way I fished. Some finesse rigs such as the Ned Rig has also been a game changer. Recently I found another game changer. It is the drop shot rig.

In mid-summer I found bass weren't in the shallow water where I normally found them. I blamed the strange, inconsistent weather. I have always believed if you can't find fish in shallow water then they must be deep. With that in mind, I rigged up a cou-

ple of drop shot rods for the first time and the next time I went fishing I went deep.

I parked the boat in fifteen to twenty feet of water about a hundred feet from shore. Fifty feet in front of me was a weed bed and I cast to the outside of the weeds. That day I hammered bass and the drop shot changed my game.

For the last half of the summer, I have found great fishing in deeper water with the drop shot on every lake I fished. These were fish I hadn't been able to get to before but now the drop shot rig changed that. Additionally, it seems fish in deeper water

are less likely to be spooked by recreational boat traffic which can be intense on many lakes during the weekends.

HOW TO RIG THE DROP SHOT

The drop shot rig is not a complicated bait. With a Palmer knot I tie a normal plastic worm hook to the line a couple feet up from the end of the line. About a foot below the hook I tie a swivel where I attach a small bell shaped sinker. For the plastic worm I use a normal plastic worm which floats, threading it on the hook like a Texas rig.



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WAYNE MORGENTHALER

Something in the Air When to keep the lid on good fishing

As every angler knows, there are times when the fishing just stinks. In this article, we will explore a fishing trip that truly had a stench of its own. Our malodorous adventure occurred in early April when Jim Heiar and I went fishing in pursuit of northern pike in Muscoda, Wisconsin. The backwaters were flooded and there was a strong current where there is normally a quiet flowing lake. Northern pike are aggressive but hard to locate during the spring. When I do go fishing this time of the year, I always make sure that my accomplice and I can switch to another type of angling without much delay. During this particular trip, the weather was partly cloudy with a slight wind out of the west. The water level was up two feet and the Wisconsin River was in full flood mode.

The only live bait I had was night-crawlers and redworms which were for Jim in case we found bluegills. We paddled around for an hour but only caught one small northern. At one point, Jim threw a top-water bait towards some submerged brush. Just as soon as his bait hit the water, there were boiling fish everywhere. We had found the well-hidden sunfish and switched to ultra-light poles and fly rods.

This particular spot had a circling current which I felt would be a tremendous spot for bluegills to get food without having to battle the raging waters. We anchored in the middle of the swirling current in about four feet of water. Jim grabbed the pole with a small bobber set about a foot deep with a number eight hook.

When Jim goes fishing with me, I supply the bait and poles. When I go with him, he does the same. I also had some red worms in a cup that I told him to use first. I had the fly rod and used a rubber spider. The action was fast and furious for both of us. Then Jim ran out of worms, but I had a backup. I brought

along an ice cream bucket of night-crawlers that I used for trout fishing two weeks before.


Thank goodness for me, Jim took the lid off the bucket. In less time than it takes to shake a stick, I found myself watching in amazement as his face changed colors right before my very eyes. His facial hues went from pale white to a light blue color. I couldn't avert my eyes from his face as it contorted into a variety of expressions, none of which I could say were pleasant to behold.

I can't repeat the colorful language that spewed forth from Jim's mouth during the course of this smelly affair; *On Wisconsin Outdoors* is, after all, a family-oriented publication.

Much to my chagrin and Jim's surprise, the heat from a two-week stay in my truck proved to be too much for the crawlers and the impetus to Jim's "nose-worthy" experience. The crawlers' transition from life to afterlife was accompanied by the emission of an unholy stench as their mortal remains decomposed in the ice cream container and loosed upon Jim's unsuspecting olfactory senses.

Jim's ordeal wasn't over even after the crawlers were buried at sea. Do you remember me noting that we were in a circling current? Jim was able to enjoy the odor a few more times as it circled around him in the circling current.

This story does have a happy ending. We caught 30 nice sunnies and the first fish for the spring season.

Don't forget to take a friend fishing and bring along a bottle of air freshener. 

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

On The Cover

On a hot August afternoon in 2018, OWO Publisher Dick Ellis followed Rock River Rescue co-founder Tom Beyer with camera and notebook to capture the story of a revitalized Wisconsin fishery.

DAVE DUWE

The Fall Fishing Gifts

Isolation and great success

For many people, fall is a pleasant time to go hunting and they replace their fishing poles for a bow or shotgun. But just because it's after Labor Day, it doesn't mean that fishing season is over. Some of the best months for fishing are September and October. Some of the best reasons to fish fall is the reduction in fishing pressure and boat traffic. It can be very pleasant and relaxing.

The fish I target in fall are Walleyes, Largemouth Bass, Crappies and Northern Pike. For the Northern Pike and the Largemouth Bass, I find fishing shallow weed flats most successful. This can be as shallow as two to eight feet of water. The best baits for me are white spinner baits and jerk baits. For the white spinner baits, I stick to ¼ ounce with one nickel blade. I like to slow roll them over the dying weeds. The jerk baits I use are Rapala Husky jerks with a long cast and a stop-and-go retrieve. My favorite colors are chrome and blue or chrome and black.

Walleye fishing in the fall is my favorite. I will target the walleye at first light or especially at night. Most nights there are very few of us out on the lakes. Without question, the full moon periods offer the best production. I have most of my success just after the turnover period; as the warm surface water cools and sinks to the bottom it will mix with the cooler deep water making the whole lake the same temperature. The turnover causes the lake to become completely oxygenated again. This process can take a couple of days or a couple of weeks depending on wind and air temperatures.

For Walleyes, I concentrate just off the main lake points in the main lake basin. My favorite bait for this time of year is a jigging Rapala in size seven. I will fish either chrome and blue or pearl with black spots to match the abundance of Crappie bait fish in my lake. I rig my jigging Rapalas on a six-foot, six-inch medium action spinning rod spooled with six-pound Fireline and a thirty-six inch leader of ten pound fluorocarbon. Keep the boat slightly moving the whole time and keep the bait



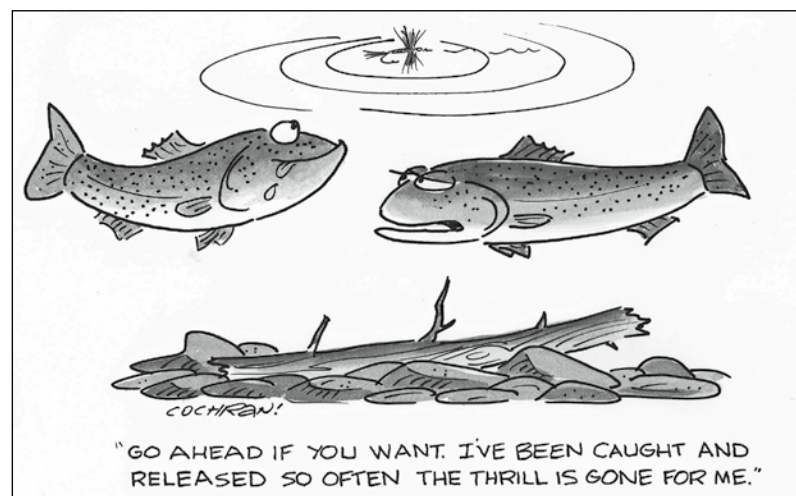
Jim with a huge Fall Largemouth, thanks to Dave Duwe's Guide Service

in constant contact with the bottom.

As the days get shorter and the nights get cool, it signals the time that black crappies start to school. Other than the spring spawn, this is the best time to catch a bunch of the fat crappies. Once schooled, the crappies are relatively easy to catch. They are feeding so one just needs to present the bait at the proper depth. This can be accomplished by slip bobber rigs or casting an Arkie 1/32 ounce lead head jig with a small twister tail. I find the best colors are purple or chartreuse. For the jig and twister combo, I make long casts with a count-down approach to achieve the desired depth. It will take some experimenting to determine where the active fish are. Of course, the longer the pause the deeper the jig will sink. I prefer a slow retrieve with numerous stops and starts. This will help to entice the bite.

For those of you who put your boats away after Labor Day, it may be time to reconsider. The fall bite is one of the best of year, the fish are schooled and plentiful and you have a great opportunity to find them and catch yourself a trophy. 🐟

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



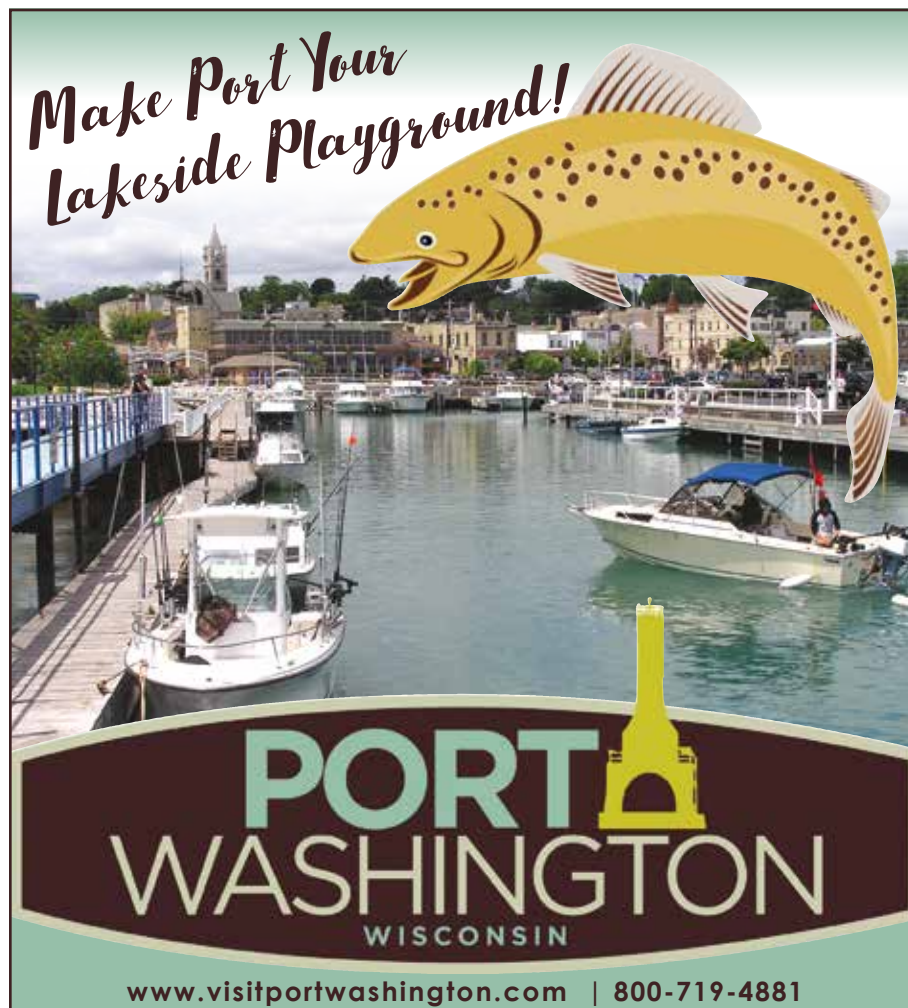
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DICK ELLIS

Rock River Rescue

Concerted recovery lays blueprint for other Wisconsin fisheries

Another smallmouth rises from the softly flowing waters of the Rock River to sting the plastic being offered by Tom Beyer on a still and humid August afternoon. This fish though, is even better than a pair of 16-inch fish and a score of other bronzes that had already entertained Beyer over just an hour on the water before being gently released back into the current to fight another day.

"Oh, this is a nice fish," Beyer says softly as a bowed rod adds an exclamation point to the statement and the fish continues to stay tight to the bottom rip-rock. "This big girl has got some shoulders. They're so healthy here. The Rock River is as good as I've seen in Wisconsin when we're talking smallmouth bass, and I've fished the Black, the Chippewa... Namekagon..."

Eventually, the largest fish of the day at 18 inches, two inches shy of Beyer's largest, surrenders to a lot of finesse and 6-pound test. A fabulous hour of fishing is in the books. Despite searing mid-day temperatures in the eighties, the fish have cooperated. And this reporter, who had done nothing but stand in knee deep water to capture the show with a camera and notebook, is sold. The Rock River Rescue, built on a foundation of time and patience, has breathed new life into a tributary seemingly on life support just 15 years before.

The Rock historically had potential as a quality fishery. Beyer remembers as a teenager in his parents' furniture business listening to the tales of an old timer revisiting smallmouth trips to the river in the 1930s. By the 1970s though, the DNR had been compelled to poison the Rock with rotenone in an effort to eradicate a strangling carp population and had stocked the water with gamefish to jump start the river. Beyer would take his bike as a high schooler and catch enough smallies from the Watertown bridges to stimulate thoughts of what might be.

By the early 2000s, the question bantered about in a local baitshop with eventual Rock River Rescue co-founder Leonard Pochowski had evolved to "What can we do about the river?" Which evolved to a single bucket being placed for donations outside the local Farm & Fleet and addressing virtually anyone who would listen about the need to re-



Reaping the dividends of 15 years of time and effort, Rock River Rescue co-founder Tom Beyer prepares to release another 17 inch smallmouth.

talize the Rock. "People told us the river was so polluted we were wasting our time," Beyer said. "They said any gamefish stocked would swim down to Lake Koshkonong. They said the carp would eat the gamefish fry. It's nice to see none of that happened."

At its inception, the founders envisioned attracting maybe five new members annually to the Rock River Rescue and raising hopefully \$500 annually toward collective efforts to improve the fishery. Fifteen years later, membership stands at about 75, who bring in \$30,000 for their rejuvenation efforts. Their focus is 60 miles of the Rock from Lake Sinnissippi to the approximate 150-acre Watertown mill pond. With vital advice and assistance from the DNR, Wisconsin Chapter of the Isaac Walton League of America, the Gollon Bait & Fish Farm of Dodgeville, and many other individuals and organizations, Rock River Rescue sets its sights primarily on stocking gamefish and removing rough fish.

"Improving habitat was an early priority," Beyer said in the current, "but as you can see the fish do fine without our help."

Removing rough fish, he said, included a public awareness effort that encourages anglers to place any carp caught in receptacles located for that purpose and a Cash for Carp day that pays a bounty of \$1 per each carp removed from the water. Beyer points to the decline in the harvest from

approximately 1,000 fish and \$1,000 payout the first years of the event, to perhaps 80 to 300 fish in more recent years as a sure sign that the rough fish are on the way out. Man-made efforts were assisted by nature when a Koi Herpes virus that affects only carp eliminated a DNR-estimated 80 percent of the Rock carp population in 2013. Any carp remaining from fry to adult also face predators from bluegill to flathead cats stocked specifically to help control further the population.

With the pump ready for priming, gamefish are stocked utilizing the expertise of Gollon Bait & Fish Farm. On average, 3,000 smallmouth bass are stocked annually, 3,000 walleyes, 500 to 750 northern pike, and 300 muskies. A bucket-brigade is formed to escort the 4-6-inch extended growth gamefish from the Gollon fisheries truck to the Rock during the single-day effort.

Still, Beyer, an avid fisherman frequently seeking hard evidence of improvement with a rod and reel, remained unconvinced after many years that the collective efforts were working at all. Channel cats remained virtually his only catches.

"I called Tim Gollon and told him that there was nothing here as far as gamefish were concerned," Beyer said. "I just didn't think it was working. He said 'The river is healthy. You have to give it time.' He knows his stuff. About five years ago, there was an explosion of the gamefish population."

Standing in the Rock on a scorching August afternoon, Beyer's hope has been replaced by the knowledge that fishermen will catch and release quality smallmouth on the Rock. He credits a simple and concerted effort by people and organizations helping the Rock River Rescue. And he invites the generations to follow to carry the baton further.

"It's very cool to see the kids carry the buckets of fish to the river on stocking day," he said. "If you're 20 years old you don't know what it's like not to have fish in the river. They're welcome to make it even better. We're hoping to find people of like minds. There's been no egos, no trained biologists or anything like that on our Board, just a simple,

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On Wisconsin
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Presents... — FISHING GUIDES — Dan Diedrich & Clay Heller



CAPT. LEE HAASCH

Autumn in Algoma

Great fall fishing, and so much more

Fall is a magical time for most outdoors people. Hunting, fishing, hiking, biking, etc., are all great fall activities and Algoma is a great place to experience all of those activities and more. What makes this a special place for me is I can be on the lake before sunrise catching King Salmon or Steelhead and by late afternoon, the peace and quiet of my deer stand is my calling. In between there are endless opportunities for numerous outdoor activities like apple picking, biking, hiking or just sightseeing.

Fall festivals are happening throughout the area and Algoma also hosts the Wet Whistle Wine Fest in mid-September. Almost every weekend within a short drive from Algoma you can attend a community festival and enjoy some of the most deli-

cious local ethnic food fares you can imagine. A short distance to the west you can attend a Packer practice or take in a game and tour the Packer Hall of Fame.

If you are thinking fall and harvest time, a trip to the Door Peninsula would not be complete without stopping by Country Ovens and Cherry Delight in Forestville to load up on an awesome assortment of cherry products. Who could skip Wienke's Market, just north of Algoma, loaded with pies, jellies, fruits, vegetables and canned goods, all locally grown and prepared? While you are there, stop next door at Renard's Cheese Factory for a wide assortment of straight-from-the-factory cheese products. Don't forget the squeaky fresh cheese curds. Bearcat's Fish House is a must stop to get fresh smoked fish, my

favorite is the brown sugar salmon, and other wonderful seafood products. Save time to take in a tour at von Stiehl Winery, Wisconsin's oldest licensed winery and sample award winning wines.

A trip to Algoma would never be complete without doing a little fishing. The Ahnapee River running through Algoma is full of ready-to-spawn Chinook Salmon and later Brown Trout and even Coho Salmon. But my favorite is heading off-shore in one of the many local charter boats and filling your cooler with silver steelhead and young salmon. If fishing is your main objective and the lake happens to be too rough, within 15 minutes from any Algoma motel or campground, you can be on the Bay of Green Bay targeting world class smallmouth, trophy walleye or monster muskies.


Heading off-shore in the pre-dawn hours and watching a colorful sunrise while battling a silver dancing steelhead is a thrill like no other. This action can be fast and furious this time of year and these acrobatic fish make for some the best table fare that I like to call the "prime rib of the lake." This has always been one of my favorite times of the year to score some great eating fish for the winter.



Bird watchers have marveled at the different types of birds regularly seen around Algoma. From eagles to pelicans to humming birds, Algoma has them all!

Fall is harvest time in Wisconsin and the Algoma area offers the beauty of fall colors, wonderful opportunities to get farm fresh products, award winning wines, local apple and cherry products, pick some fresh apples, attend a festival or bird watching. Algoma is the "Sport Fishing Capital of the Great Lakes."

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

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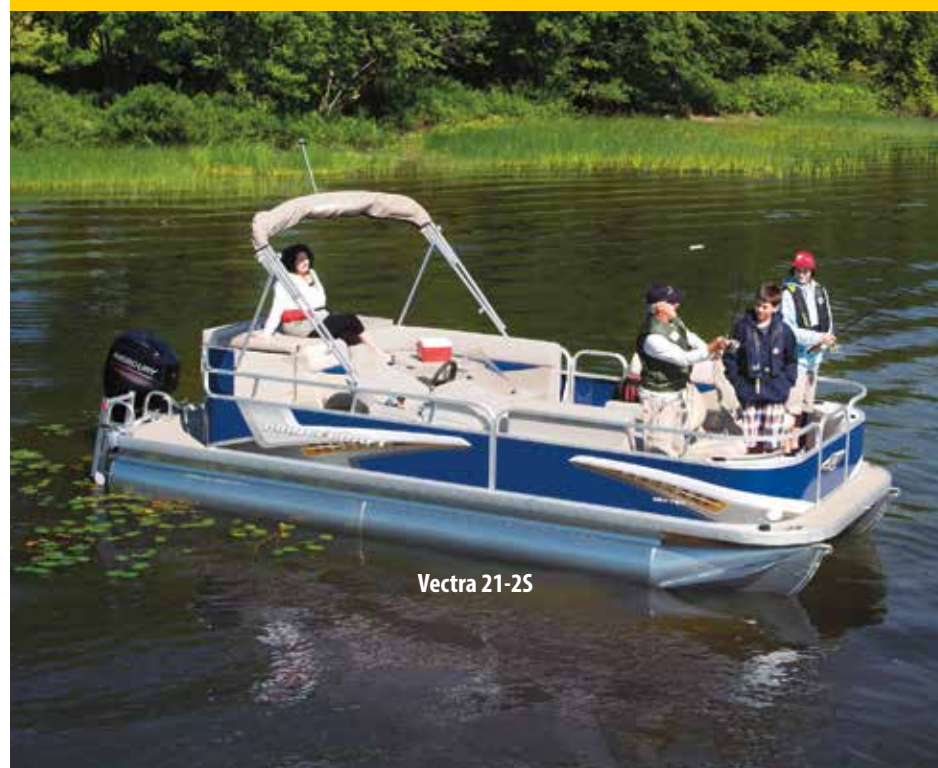
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AN 'UP NORT' REPORT BY DAN MOERICKE

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DAN MOERICKE

An 'Up Nort' Report

The canoe stops here

Paddling a canoe on a pristine lake is about as peaceful as it gets. On this particular August day in the Sylvania Wilderness Area just west of Watersmeet, my wife and I were enjoying the serenity when it was violently interrupted by a very bitter lake trout. The rod tip pounded into the water and I dug the paddle in hard to set the hook. And the battle was on.

I'm not a big fan of trolling as a method of catching fish, but row trolling in a canoe somehow seems a little more personal. The effort required to pull dipsy divers down into the 40-50 foot depths that lake trout seem to favor makes any success seem just that much sweeter.

Make no mistake, when a lake trout of sufficient size realizes that it's hooked, it will pull the canoe in whatever direction it chooses. And so it was. From the back of the canoe, all

I could do was watch and coach my spouse on the workings of the drag on her reel. We've come a long way from the old days of counting the number of turns of the reel handle to try and guess how much line we're dragging behind the canoe. These days we've got line counter reels that allow us to troll with a certain level of precision. The line counter also helps to keep score when the battle between trout and angler is raging.

In this case, my wife announced that the trout was winning as she watched the fish peel line off the reel. Ultimately though, we could make out the dipsy diver some 15-20 feet below the canoe and a big shadow with a head the size of a football behind it. After what seemed like a long time, the net slid under the trout and my wife's arms stopped shaking.

Barbless hooks are the rule in Sylvania, so unhooking and releasing fish is made much

easier. This one, however, reached the required 30" minimum and was declared to be destined for the smoker. A cooler full of ice would serve as its accommodations for the ride back to the landing. Smoked lake trout is a great treat that we savor...again, I think the effort that went into it makes it taste that much better.

On this particular day, the trout gods smiled on us as we boated six lakers in several hours of fishing and I missed one more. That's a great day in the wilderness in my book.

Canoeing in the Sylvania wilderness is about as peaceful as it gets, but when a big lake trout stops the canoe, I don't mind the interruption. 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.

Kay Moericke emerges victorious in battle with spotted submarine.



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JERRY KIESOW

Fly Fishing in Wisconsin

Flies that float, and those that don't

In last month's column, I explained why, in my view, there are only two kinds of flies – those that float and those that do not – dry and wet. Let me explain.

My favorite dry fly is a yellow popper. Why yellow? Because yellow works well at our cottage on the Peshtigo River, be they poppers, streamers, Woolly Worms, or whatever. Will other colors work? Sure, but yellow is my go-to color and poppers my go-to fly when fishing for panfish and smallmouth bass in the evening.

That said, I use many different flies, tied in many colors. Especially when fishing with wet flies.

I love fishing streamers, no matter what their color. I fish them casting to wood and weeds, giving them a twitch or moving the rod back and forth causing the fly to move this way and that like a real minnow. Occasionally, but not often, I strip them in toward me fast like a scared baitfish. This method is mostly used in saltwater, but I know anglers who do this for muskies and big pike.

For streamers, I like the black-nosed Dace, which has two colors of bucktail and squirrel tail in the wing. I also recommend the McGinty, which looks like a bee and can be tied and fished as a wet fly. I also like a friend's go-to fly for trout – the Black Ghost. This streamer has flat, tied back-to-back, white hackle wings; a black body, ribbed with fine flat tinsel; and yellow ac-

cents in the tail and throat.

I often troll wet flies as I paddle my canoe upriver or from spot to spot. Sometimes I rig up the six weight and troll larger streamers attached to a spinner.

I tie my streamers on #6 to #2/0 hooks, both long and short shank. Most are tied on #6s and #4s so I can cast them with my three-weight. I tie on #6s down to #14s to my other wets, which are the smallest I can now tie due to my aging eyes.

I fish quite a bit with the Woolly Bugger in a variety of colors. At home, when I fish the Milwaukee River, I have found that an olive Woolly works most of the time. I cast it across and slightly up or down, depending on which direction I am fishing, and dead-drift it, mending as required. I allow the fly to "rest" at the end of the drift for a few seconds so it "waves" in the current a tad, then retrieve it either fast or slow, depending, somewhat, on how cold the water is. The fish will hit the fly during any part of the drift, hold or retrieve.

That's enough for now. See you in the river. Keep a good thought! 🐟

Jerry enjoys all aspects of the outdoors and shares them in many ways through his photos, words, and workshops. He has written two books, "Tales of The Peshtigo Putzer," and "Photos, Poems and a Little Bit of Prose." Both make great additions to your outdoor library, and great gifts. They are available for purchase at his website: www.jerrykiesowoc.com. Check it out often to follow his endeavors.



To me there are only two kinds of flies – wet and dry. I fish a variety of colored flies, but my go-to color is yellow.



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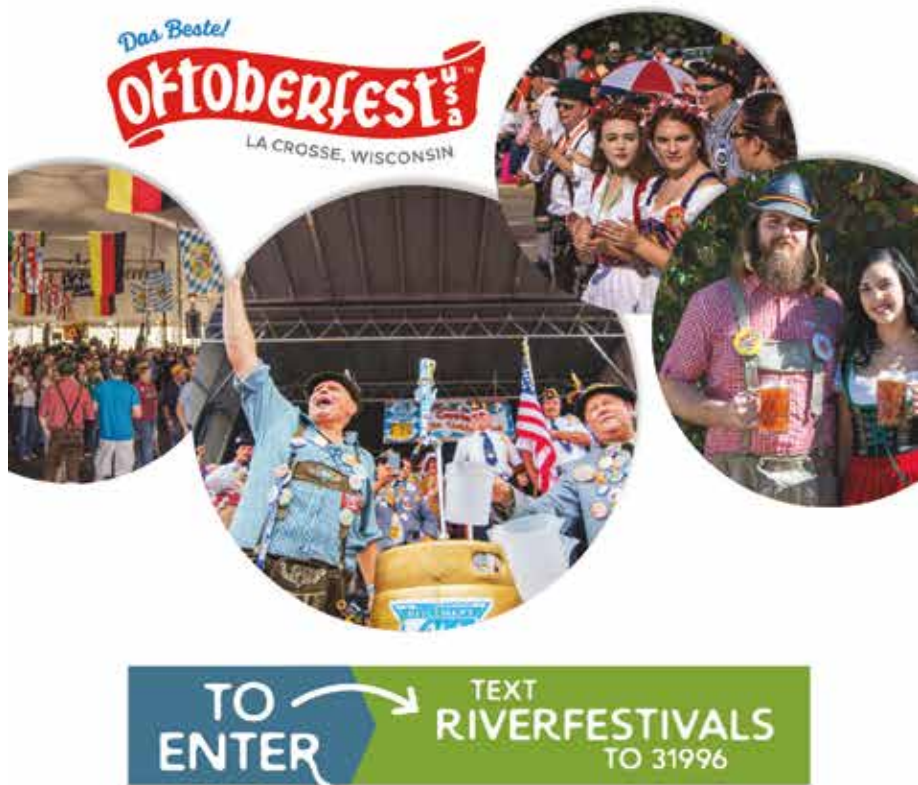




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SCHWEIK, FROM PAGE 2

the past severely limits your chances for success. When I'm walleye fishing, I use minnows in the spring and fall, but night crawlers clearly outperform them in the summer months. Crawlers are what walleyes want and it's what produces best for me. I could stay with minnows year long, but I can assure you that I also won't catch nearly as many fish.

I like spinners and glide baits in spring for muskies, but as we move to summer, I move to top-water baits and big bucktails. As we transition to fall I run big rubber baits and jerkbaits. Again, I could run the same presentation all year long and, yes, I may catch fish. Not nearly as many, though, as will be caught by changing the presentation.

Going back to the same locations and

running the same presentation year after year is a limited game. Trying new water and offering different presentations are keys to your future success as an angler. Be diverse. Have initiative to try new things.

A good friend of mine once told me "You don't know what you don't know."

When you commit to trying something totally different, you're really moving toward the head of the class. And who knows what you'll find!

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

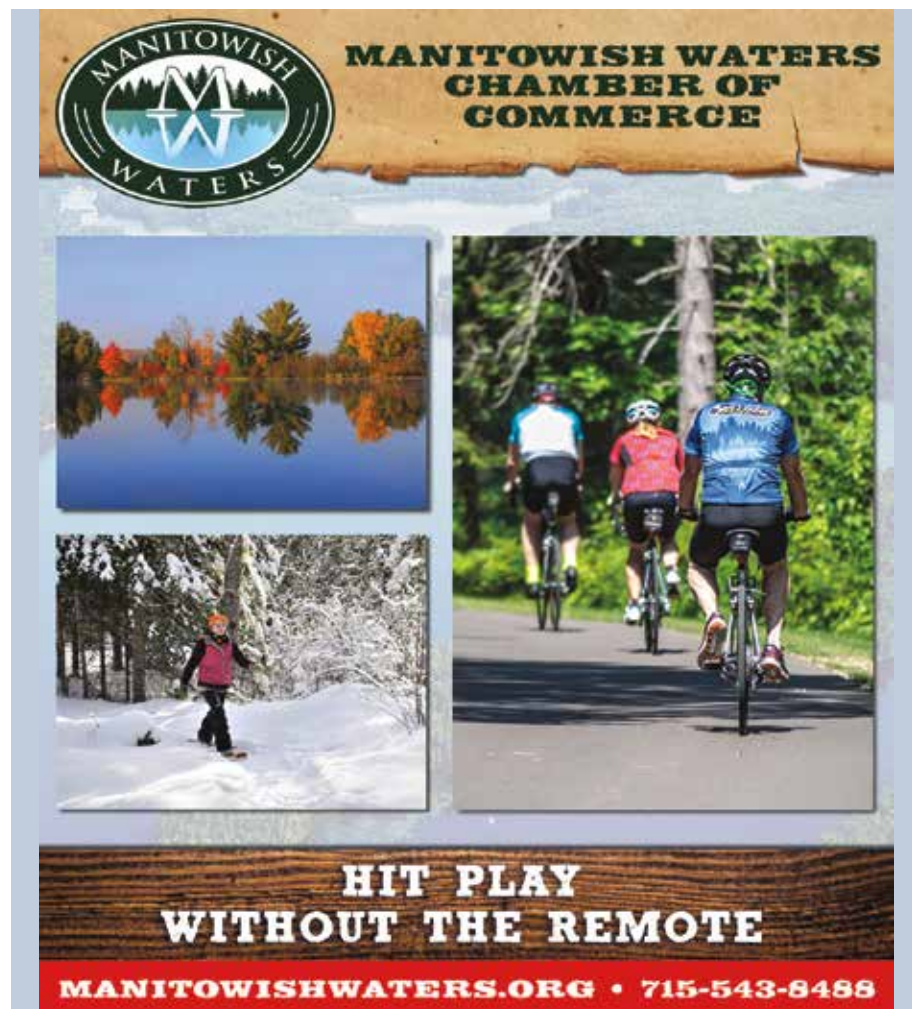
ELLIS, FROM PAGE 6

fantastic, collective effort of a lot of people. Every lake association in Wisconsin could do this. It just takes time and effort. A healthy river is beneficial to everyone. The local baitshop, the restaurants and gas stations and motels from people coming here to fish."

"We were trying to build an ecosystem where there was none," he said. "But what's

happened here on the Rock River is beyond my wildest dreams."

The Rock River Rescue annual benefit including live and silent auctions, gun boards and a livewell full of fun will be held on October 6 at Turner Hall in Watertown beginning at 5:30 pm with dinner at 7 pm. Cost is \$35.00. Connect with www.rock-riverrescue.org, facebook, or Tom Beyer at 920-988-6965 for more information.



Explore Wisconsin



ASHLAND COUNTY

Waterfalls and Fall Fishing

Escape to Ashland County

Ashland Wisconsin, the Heart of Chequamegon Bay, Where you will Find Yourself Next to The Water, is a community known for three extraordinary assets. The first is Lake Superior, the greatest of the Great Lakes and Chequamegon Bay. The second is the Historic Murals in Ashland, where in 2005 Ashland was named the Historic Mural Capital of Wisconsin. The third is the friendly people that make up this city located on the south shore of Lake Superior.

Now let's talk fishing and waterfalls in Ashland County. The city of Ashland is the county seat for Ashland County and boasts some of Northern Wisconsin's most spectacular waterfalls. Copper Falls State Park features three scenic waterfalls on the Tyler Forks and Bad Rivers. The park's natural attractions also include canyons, deep gorges, streams, and a swimming beach. Visitors will enjoy the picnic area with a log shelter, miles of self-guided nature trails, and a family campground. Log buildings built by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s add to the park's charm.

There is plenty to do in Ashland County, including hiking, bicycling, picnicking, fishing and swimming. In the winter, skiing and snowshoeing are popular activities on the trails. The park has four classic-only loops, beginner-intermediate, totaling 11.4 km. Copper Falls also boasts two skate/classic combination loops totaling 10.5 km. All of the park's trails are generally well-groomed and maintained.

The North Country National Scenic Trail also passes through Copper Falls State Park. Located about two miles north-east of the city of Mellen, Copper Falls itself is a 40-foot waterfall which marks the first drop of the Bad River as it flows through steep-walled gorges of rugged and awesome splendor. A 500-acre area around the falls has been designated as a State Natural Area. The park also encompasses Red Granite Falls on the Bad River and the 30-foot Brownstone Falls cascading down the Tyler Forks River.


Copper Falls State Park's concession



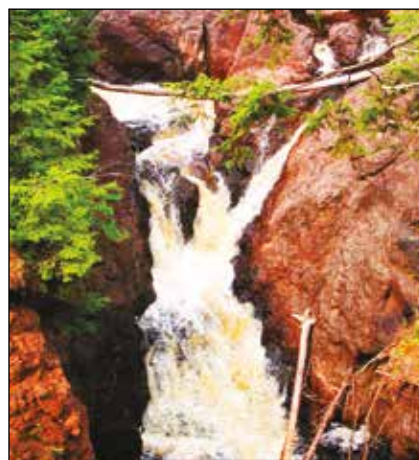
Lake Trout caught near the Apostle Islands

stand is open daily from Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day weekend and on weekends through mid-October. The concession stand offers a small gift shop along with soft drinks, light lunches, ice cream, and ice. Sunday mornings are especially popular at the concession as a pancake breakfast is held.

Winter, spring, summer and fall – Ashland County is a year-round vacation destination for nature enthusiasts and silent sports fans. No matter the season, Ashland County cordially welcomes visitors to enjoy and explore this shining jewel crowning the greatest of the Great Lakes. Ashland Wisconsin is proud to be known as a four season fishing destination.

Soon we will be moving into fall and many anglers will tell you this can be arguably the best time to be out fishing. Cooler temperatures trigger all fish to bulk up for the coming winter. It also is spawning time for the Lake Superior salmon and brown trout. Stream-fishing the tributaries is a popular fall pastime with the opportunity to catch Coho and Chinook salmon, as well as rainbow, lake and brown trout. Shallow-water fishing picks up, inland and on Lake Superior, as the water cools and fish are more active during the day. Fall is trophy time for muskies on the inland waters and northern pike on Chequamegon Bay. The fishing heats up all the way until the water freezes. 

For an update on what is biting and the best bait to use for this time of year call the local bait shops in Ashland. Check out travelashlandcounty.com for more recreation ideas in Ashland County.



Copper Falls State Park in Ashland County.

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PRICE COUNTY - KATHY REINHARD

The Fabulous Flambeau

North, south forks offer great paddling, fishing

The Flambeau River, located in the Price County region of Wisconsin, is well known for its world-class canoeing and kayaking experiences. But, did you know, the Flambeau River is also a spectacular destination for fishing?

The river is surrounded by a mixed northern hardwood forest of sugar and red maple, red oak, yellow birch, white ash and beautiful stands of quaking aspen. Frequent stands of conifers along the river include red, jack and white pines, tall hemlocks and occasional cedars overhanging rocky riverbanks.

There is very little human development on the riverbank. Abundant wildlife includes bald eagle, osprey, white-tailed deer, black bear, raccoon, fisher and otter. Wolves and coyotes are rarely seen but occasionally heard, yapping and crooning on clear, moonlit nights.


In Price County, the Flambeau River is technically two rivers: the North Fork and the South Fork. The North Fork takes on a variety of moods as it flows southward from the headwater towards its confluence with the Chippewa River. Rock formations, fantastic scenery and excellent fishing make the North Fork a favorite among paddlers and anglers. There are fast whitewater stretches that are perfect for paddlers, as well as stretches of wide, slow-moving flowages, that are perfect for anglers. Some visitors combine the sport of canoeing/kayaking with fishing.

The best sections of the North Fork to fish for Smallmouth Bass, while also paddling, are the section from the Turtle-Flambeau Flowage down to the Agenda Landing where you'll find a good numbers of Smallies and fair size fish; the section from the Hwy 13 Bridge in Park Fall, thru Pixley Flowage and to the Pixley Dam where you'll find a fair numbers of Smallmouth and some real brutes; and the section from Pixley Dam down into Crowley Flowage where you'll find a fair number of fish of good size. The best time of year to fish is from early July to early September when the bugs are down, water levels/flow are generally stable and the fish can be very hungry.

Each September you will have the unique opportunity to fish for Lake Sturgeon on one of the Flambeau River's flowages. Sturgeon are living fossils, appearing first about 136 million years ago when the dinosaurs still roamed the earth. They have retained many primitive characteristics that have been lost or modified in other modern-day fishes. Be sure to check the Wisconsin Fishing Regulations booklet and look for Wisconsin fishing seasons and the Lake Sturgeon page if you have any questions.

A trip down the less-traveled South Fork is a trip back to a bygone era. Beginning at Round Lake, home of the historic Round Lake Logging Dam, the river winds through absolutely wild country. Just south of the logging dam, you'll pass under another historic gem, the Smith Rapids Covered Bridge. Deep hemlock forests and thick

pinus, along with some nice stretches of whitewater, make this one of the most beautiful and exciting paddles anywhere. The South Fork has a number of rapids that are more challenging than those found on the North Fork and is better suited for more experienced canoers and kayakers. Anglers target both Smallmouth and Northern on the river. Unlike the North Fork which is controlled by a series of dams, the South

Fork of the Flambeau can become quite low at times during the summer months without consistent rain and is best paddled in the spring of the year. 

Either way, North Fork or South Fork, paddling or fishing, the Flambeau River is waiting for you! Contact the Price County Tourism Department at 75-339-4505 or www.pricecountywi.net for visitor information.



The north and south forks of the Flambeau River offer great paddling, and great fishing.



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JIM SERVI

Floating the Wisconsin River

An adventure as old as time

Few things more fully represent Wisconsin than the river that takes on its name. Often referred to as the hardest working river in America with more than two dozen dams, the Wisconsin River travels nearly 430 miles through the entire length of Wisconsin. Starting at Lac Vieux Desert on the border with the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, the mighty River cuts through the heart of Wisconsin before dumping into the Mississippi River near Prairie du Chien.

The Wisconsin River has always been central to life in our great state. Native Americans used it frequently for travel and trade, as well as the life support it provided. The earliest French explorers, Jean Nicolet and Father Jacques Marquette, were drawn to it as well during the 1600s. It became central for the fur trade, the lumber boom, and multiple industries. Today it is used as much for recreation as it is for enterprise, as it continues to draw people for a variety of outdoor activities.

Growing up near the River, I was drawn to its magnitude and beauty. Many of my fondest memories were of fishing and exploring along the banks with my family and friends. As I grew up, the urge to see it all grew stronger. One of my lifelong goals was to travel the entire length of the River. In 2010, that journey finally began with my brother Jeff and sister Christy. We started at the very beginning, just below Lac Vieux Desert where the River wasn't much wider than our kayaks and we had to portage around beaver dams rather than man-made dams. The goal wasn't to finish in one continuous float, but rather to return each year and complete it one section at a time. Approximately 80 miles later, the lifelong journey continues.

Throughout its history, people have been attracted to the challenge of traveling the length of the River, just as I am. Early explorers wanted to see what was beyond uncharted territory. Modern day explorers, like Ben Sasse who traveled the length of the River in eight days, 12 hours, and



Martin Kwick with a nice largemouth bass caught while floating the Wisconsin River

37 minutes last year, wanted to see if they were up for the challenge. Martin Kwick was attracted to the River for another reason. He set out to raise money for two charitable campaigns, raffling off a kayak package and a GoBoat. For eight days, he lived on the River with his 160 pounds of gear – fishing, camping, and portaging the many dams. As he floated, he recorded the adventure for his Angler One YouTube channel. Only when his battery finally died because his solar panel couldn't keep up did his journey end, but not before he raised approximately \$2,000 for Heroes on the Water and the Boys and Girls Club of Wausau. "We all take adventures for ourselves, but it's very seldom we take adventures to do something for others. This was the perfect blend for both worlds," Kwick explained. Although this was his first attempt at traveling the length of the River, it will likely not be his last, as he learned many lessons along the way. "I would gladly go on a trip like this again. The only issues are marking sure I end up with a revised equipment plan. I have learned a lot from it and can make some solid adjustments."

For those of you interested in starting your own Wisconsin River journey, you now have the perfect connection to learn from with Martin Kwick. Look him up on YouTube at Angler One. 🐟

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

YURK, FROM PAGE 3

The worms I am using for drop shot rigs are those I once used with a bullet shaped sinker for the Texas rig to get them to bottom. With the drop shot, the sinker runs along the bottom with the worm floating a foot or so above the sinker.

I cast the rig out, give it a moment or two to sink to the bottom, and then retrieve it back to the boat by lifting the rod tip a foot or two, reel up the slack as I drop the rod tip, and then lift the rod tip again. It is the same way I work any plastic bait.



The bass Shawn Arneson is holding came from deep water, caught with a drop shot rig while fishing a northwestern Wisconsin lake.

Normally I use a one-quarter ounce, bell-shaped sinker. If it is windy or the water deeper than 20 feet, I increase the weight of the sinker to three eighths. There are weights especially designed for drop shot rigs, however, the bell shaped sinkers are cheaper, easier to find, and work just as well as the specialty drop

shot weights. I like to keep it simple with bell shaped sinkers.

Some fishermen tie the drop shot sinkers directly to the line and some of the drop shot weights have a clip you can slip on the line, but I just use a swivel. It allows me to change weights and sinkers without a lot of fuss or wasted time.

THE DROP SHOT WORM

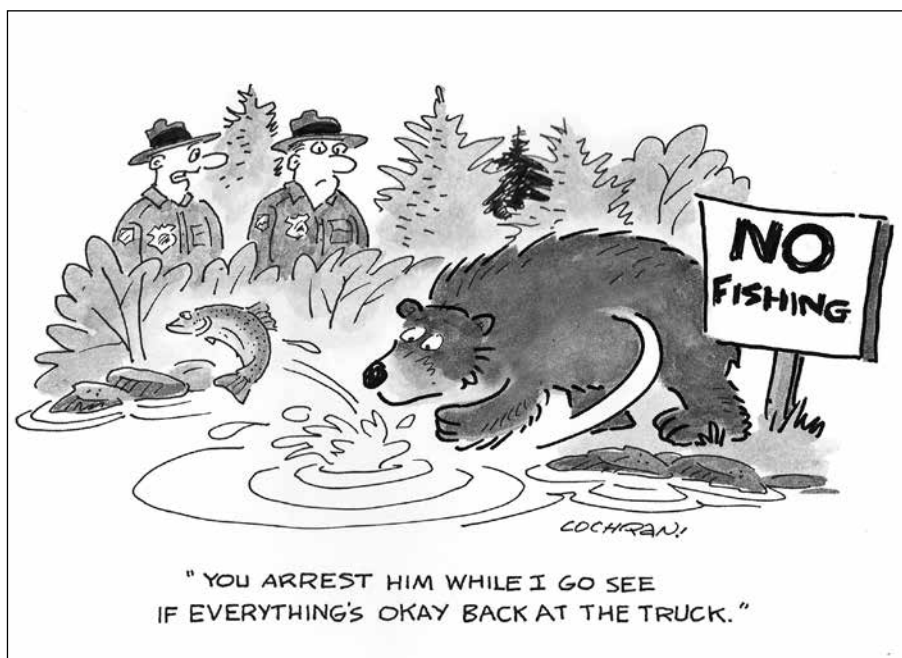
As mentioned earlier, I am using the same floating worms with a curly tail I once used on Texas rigs. The six – or seven-inch worms works well, but if the fish are finicky, perhaps a four-inch worm might be more productive.

As with all plastic worm fishing, color may or may not make a difference. I dug out a bunch of old Texas rig worms in an assortment of colors. I tried a bunch of different colors on several lakes and they all caught fish.

On one lake on one day, my wife Becky and I found only a light purple worm consistently caught more fish. I used a couple of different colors, but she had more strikes and caught more fish with the light purple worm than I did using other colors. So the lesson here is to be prepared with a variety of colors in case fish are going to be choosy on any given day.

The drop shot rig has added a whole new dimension to bass fishing. It has given us a the opportunity to catch bass in deep water like no other bait has been able to do. It truly is a game changer. 🐟

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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JERRY DAVIS

No Season Closure

Recruiting new outdoor enthusiasts is unending, rewarding

The lifeblood of all outdoors activities depends on the health of attracting new hunters, anglers, trappers, birders, gatherers and general conservationists. The idea that the way to attract new recruits to the outdoor sports is simply sticking a fishing rod or a shotgun in their hands needs to be abandoned. Sometimes this method works and sometimes it doesn't. One thing for sure is that Wisconsin needs more people to get involved and support its outdoor programs and services. Hunter and anglers generally have an appreciation for the outdoors and, as such, it is only natural they lead the effort to attract others to the outdoor sports and help fund and preserve our natural heritage.

A complicated plan is not needed to recruit others to the great outdoors. What is needed is more community involvement by hunters and anglers. The following are several examples of this idea in action:

A local church held its annual wild foods banquet last winter. Hunters and anglers brought in food from their freezers. This was an opportunity for all of those in attendance, whether they were five years old or 80 to sample fried perch and bluegills. Inevitably, some of those at the banquet asked where the fish came from, how they could get some, were they expensive and could their parents af-



Two young boys don't mind learning about snakes when they get to handle a bullsnake.

ford to buy them?

Did the church supper also recruit some new anglers? Some new hunters? Most likely.


A week-long, summer enrichment course, "Let's Go Pick Blackcaps," incorporated writing, math, English and food preparation. The ice cream was purchased, but the berries came from a bike trail most kids rode every day. One of the students asked, "Could I go and get some more berries af-

ter this class is over?"

A knowledgeable gentleman brought two bullsnakes to a traditions day celebration and after 20 minutes, the boys and girls were begging to hold and pet the four-foot reptiles. The "instructor" took this opportunity to explain the importance of protecting this species of animal.

The ideas are out there. Sometimes the students don't take to hunting, but they begin to understand nature, are more inquisitive, and more daring. Their parents shouldn't ever use the worn out phrase, "we aren't out of the woods yet." Our hope is some of these young folks never come out of the woods, at least not in their minds.

As long as we're tossing out misconceptions, stop thinking that birders, bikers, campers and hikers are not on nature's side. This means they are also on our side. The new hunters might just be better able to talk to other outdoor devotees than we have been.

Beware, too, that berry picker just might come knocking and ask to tag along and sit in a turkey blind. 

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



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| Largemouth Bass *northern zone* | May 5 - Mar. 3 |
| Smallmouth bass *northern zone harvest* | May 5 - Mar. 3 |
| Large and smallmouth bass *southern zone* | May 5 - Mar. 3 |
| Musky *northern zone* | May 26 - Nov. 30 |
| Musky *southern zone* | May 5 - Dec. 31 |
| Northern Pike..... | May 5 - Mar. 3 |
| Walleye..... | May 5 - Mar. 3 |
| Lake Sturgeon *hook and line* | Sept. 1 - Sept. 30 |

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ON  HUNT

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MIKE FOSS

Tips for Tagging that Big Bear

Extreme patience, smart baiting... and a bit of insurance

Where did that big bear go? The summer bear that you captured on trail camera over your bait, the one you know you wouldn't hesitate to fasten a tag to in September?

Often, I am asked that same question by Wisconsin bear hunters in an email, a phone call, or in a discussion on a hunting forum. From experience, I know that a mature bear has a roaming range of up to 20 miles. There is no doubt that during pre-season baiting and after the breeding season he will visit almost every bait station within that range at least once, if not many times. Over decades of baiting for hunters and hosting up to 40 bait stations scattered within 40 square miles across northern Bayfield County, the travel patterns of big bears, sometimes monster bears, start to develop. Trail cam photos don't lie.

Recently in a conversation with a bear guide, discussion turned to one big mature bear that we had both been hunting that tipped the scales at 411 pounds when he was finally tagged. The boar had been a regular visitor at one of my bear stations, but would also disappear for a few days at a time. That bear was shot seven miles away from one of my baits, after I had him on camera one day earlier. The best advice I can offer the hunter making



This big sow fixed on Mike Foss and captured in August on the bait by trail camera did not run off until the OWO columnist was within 25 yards.

the decision to target a mature bear is to take patience to the extreme, hunt hard, and wait him out.


As this OWO September/October issue hits the shelves, we will be only days from the opening of the 2018 Wisconsin bear season. From years in the field pursuing this passion, I've paid the dues of making mistakes that cost opportunities on smart, wily bears. But like any challenge, the mistakes ultimately earn the expertise and knowledge that have also helped

many hunters I'm baiting for tag bears from 400 to 739 pounds.

When you're looking for the edge that might help you score, keep it simple. Each day you take the stand, take in the 10-gallon daily legal limit that Wisconsin allows and use bait that is small in size like nuts, candy, and granola. And never use large pieces of bait which a bear can carry away. Because the bear has to work for that meal, small bait will last

BOB SPIERINGS

Bear Baiting 101!

Now that you have your "secret" bear bait locations, it's time to let the bears know you've arrived with the goods! The best way to inform bears that you have bait in the area is to douse the bait site with a strong, concentrated scent. A great way to do this is by pulling the top of a small sapling over and tying a rag, saturated with a strong scent, to the top of the tree. Then release the sapling back into its upright position. By doing this the wind will take the scent further, attracting more bears to your area. Additionally, apply scents on the ground and anywhere a bear may place its paws. This way, when the bear leaves the bait site, it will leave a scented trail leading other bears right to your bait. Not only are concentrated scents great for attracting bears, they also work as a cover scent during hunting season, but remember to never apply it to yourself! Looking for scent this season? Stop in at Bob's Bear Bait or order online (free shipping) for a full line of concentrated scents, liquid smoke and smears! To better serve the bear hunting community, we're expanding to two locations in Wisconsin and one in Upper Michigan! We wish you a safe and successful 2018 bear hunting season. 

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CONTINUED ON PAGE 19

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FOSS, FROM PAGE 18

longer, hopefully all day. Nothing is more frustrating for a hunter committed to tagging a larger bear than watching a smaller bear or bears that you don't plan on shooting consume all the bait with ample time left on the clock. I've seen big bears finally show for the hunter, but walk in to an empty plate and right back out again without offering a clean shot.

Because the bait may not last despite the best laid plans, carry in an insurance policy. Throughout the pre-season baiting ritual, many hunters are already using scent attractants. As the season begins, load up and use three to four times the amount of a scent attractant you used during the baiting season. If you're not using scent, start now. Use a bacon or anise gel and smear it all over a tree nearest to your bait and bait logs or hollow stump. The idea is if your bait is consumed early you will still hold a bear's attention with the scent long enough for a good shot placement. Beginning in September, we will repost our 2018 video on the homepage at www.onwisconsinoutdoors.com of a boar's reaction to our bacon anise spread on a tree. When you see it, we're betting you won't be caught in the field without it.

Good hunting. 🍖

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.

Explore Wisconsin

Fall Paddling in La Crosse County, WI



The meandering waterways of the La Crosse area are a paddling paradise, offering wetlands courses for gentle canoe rides as well as moderate to strenuous kayaking adventures along the Mississippi, Black, or La Crosse Rivers. Canoe trails, launches, and outfitters abound in the area, making it one of the best paddling destinations in the region.

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The 240,000-acre refuge encompasses 231 miles of Mississippi, from the Chippewa River in the north to Rock Island, IL, in the south. Along the way, 96 miles of canoe trails from beginner to expert levels are marked out. Several of these trails are within easy driving distance of La Crosse. Paddlers should always take caution on the river, especially when water levels are high.

Lake Onalaska Canoe Trail: A relatively new trail on the refuge. Follow the Mississippi backwaters to Lake Onalaska. From Lytle's Landing, it's an easy four miles to Fred Funk Landing or seven miles to Mosey's.

Long Lake Trail: A three to four-hour trip comprised of five easy miles through the Mississippi backwaters. From Hwy 35 in Trempealeau, head south on Fremont Street/Lake Road past the railroad tracks. It's 1.5 miles to Long Lake Landing.



Brown's Marsh Canoe Area (Lytle's Landing): An easy, unmarked paddling area that's closed year-round to motorized watercraft. Take Hwy 35 from La Crosse, turn left on Co Rd OT, left onto Co Rd ZN and a right on Co Rd Z until the road ends.

Tip: Check out the Driftless Outdoors Show May 17-18, 2019 at the Onalaska Omni Center. 50,000 square feet of kayaks, canoes, bikes, camping, fishing, archery, hiking, equipment and information brought to you by some of the nation's top experts and retailers. 📺

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Explore Wisconsin



WASHBURN COUNTY

Beautiful Washburn County

Planning your Fall River Trip on the Namekagon

As the weather begins to cool off and the summer visitors head home, the Namekagon River, Wisconsin's moving national park, begins to transition into the splendor of fall. The trees along the river begin to pop with vivid color and the migrating birds fly overhead on their way south. This is truly the perfect time of year to experience the beauty of the river that is part of the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway. The Namekagon offers an amazing opportunity to explore one of the nation's treasures at little to no cost at all.


Managed by the National Park Service, the Namekagon is an extremely well-marked riverway and beginner friendly for the majority of the river's length. Outfitters are available for those that don't have their own gear or need help with shuttling and trip planning. While the upper portion of the river generally has low water conditions in the fall, the Washburn County stretch runs fairly strong even into the fall with only occasional shallow spots where it may be necessary to walk a short distance.

Lodging options are plentiful along Washburn County's section of the river as well. Multiple private campgrounds, cabins and even a yurt are available with easy access to the river. If you really want to get away, consider over 30 river-access campsites along the Washburn County section of river. We recommend planning to stop a little early in the day to make sure you get the campsite you want as they are first come-first serve.

Gentle rapids and incredible northwoods beauty make the Namekagon a must-experience this fall. If you're looking to get off the water for a short time, be sure to check out the Trego Nature Trail which offers a short three mile hike along the banks of the



Washburn County Tourism/James Netz Photography.

river. If you're looking for the ideal getaway to enjoy the beauty of the fall season, the Namekagon is waiting for you. See you at the river. 

To begin planning your Namekagon trip, visit WashburnCounty.org or NamekagonRiver.org.



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ON  HUNT

KNOW WHERE YOU STAND.

LEE GATZKE

Finding an Edge

The deer hunters' ageless journey

I can envision our cave man ancestors sitting around a campfire plotting ways to outsmart mastodons. Killing such a creature would feed the tribe for many months. The fact that we are here today and not extinct like many species of early prey is testament to the development of hunting tactics. Along the way, our ancestors no doubt, changed hunting tactics as trial and error taught them how to become more efficient at hunting whatever game they sought.

Did one of them kill a skunk and place it near his deer stand to act as a cover scent, hoping to overcome a bad

wind? Somebody passed that trait on to me. That idea absorbed into my DNA and I wound up finding out the hard way not to ever attempt it again.

Contemporary deer hunters use tactics very different from our ancestors, but the game never ends. We're more into setting a "trap" that has deer coming to us rather than stalking or running down our prey the way the cave man did. Traps in the form of bait piles, food plots, waterholes, and other man-made attractants bring deer to us as we await their arrival. Having trail cameras monitor these traps tells



This buck was one of many attracted to a man-made rubbing post.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 25

BILL CUNNEA

The Part You Can't Buy

Those priceless outdoor buddies

Outdoorsmen—hunters, fishermen, rough-country campers—come in all sizes, shapes, backgrounds, and levels of experience. We each have degrees of interest in the equipment we use, rationales for why we made our choices, and stories of great and small accomplishments we've made with our gear. While the equipment may change, the stories, although occasionally exaggerated for dramatic effect, pretty much stay the same. The main elements are the sport we were pursuing, the gear we were using, the time of the season, the weather conditions, the canine companions the hunters were relying on, and the hunting or fishing buddies who were witnesses to the event.

We can change sports, clothes, equipment, and choose our weather, but perhaps the most vital element in any good hunting or fishing story is the cast of characters. The richest stories come packed with the habits, general behaviors, bits of life background, and years of association with the guys who were there when the great catch or wondrous shot was made, or not made.

I've got some years on me, and, thankfully, some memorable moments, mostly hunting, which I shared with hunting buddies over those years. Often I think that the element of the stories I remember, and occasionally tell, which gives the stories the most flavors, are the characters I've been with. They make the story textured, provide comic relief, and serve as occasionally reliable witness to the event—although their versions might differ from mine.

You can buy new guns, different clothes, and part with great canine companions over the years, but the vivid and

memorable part of a special hunt is irrevocably tied to the kinship, the friendship of an old hunting buddy and his actions or reactions to the event burned in your memory. They make the memories stick, and let them glow in your recollection of your life past and the great outdoors' experiences you've had.

Here's a picture I picked up at a garage sale some 40 years ago. It was just stuck in a cardboard box with a stack of others, disregarded and now, discarded, by a younger generation who was cleaning out the house and with it, the memories of folks now gone. It struck me as a great portrait of old friends, out on a pier sometime back in the 1920s or 1930s, coming back or going out to a lake for some fall fishing, or maybe duck hunting. The clothes, the boat, and the boots all harken back to a time with less technology and more rustic environments. In addition, both men are smoking! I don't know that it was a simpler time, but it was less cluttered by the stuff of life.


The image tells me a story: two old friends, both given to wise-cracking and teasing one another, so much so that they have it down to a comic routine, in "rough" clothes, talking about the shot missed (or hit), the size of the fish that slipped the lure, or even sharing one of their previous memorable events in the outdoors together. The short man in the bowler hat is reacting to some outrageous claim made by his friend of many years, whose expression is skeptical, but would follow some definite pronouncement. Whatever the topic, the big guy is sure of himself.

The picture tells of a friendship that may be, maybe, only



developed by guys who have spent time and effort together to set the decoys or find the drop-off in the lake. They know each other well. They've eaten over campfires together, they've suffered the extremes of weather, they've told each other tall tales, they are aware of the short-comings and strengths of one another, and they have complained about who used up the last of the toilet paper in the cabin.

And, in my mind, the trips to the lake, or in the brush kicking up grouse or pheasant, or sitting in a duck blind that these two guys shared were welcomed and celebrated not because of the success of the hunt or fishing expedition, but because of their companionship—a kinship and understanding that has built trust and friendship that all sportsmen can appreciate and cherish.

Hang on to your hunting buddies, they're priceless. 

Bill Cunnea has been a writer, teacher, consultant, and outdoorsman for over 40 years. He continues to be taught lessons by his dogs in southwest Wisconsin, where he's lived for 30 years. He's never caught a lunker nor shot a 12-point buck, and he has the lack of trophies to prove it.

GATZKE, FROM PAGE 24

us when to hunt them at that location. We're not as patient as our ancestors. We want action and these tactics have produced, so far.

One of the more effective, and subtle, tactics being used by a very successful contemporary hunter, Paul Ranft, is a man-made rubbing post. Paul uses a cedar fence post, placed in the ground at a strategic position, to monitor and/or hunt over. The post is dipped in a solution that attracts bucks to rub their antlers on it. It mimics the way a natural "community rub tree" attracts bucks to deposit their forehead scent gland odor to a single tree that many of the mature bucks in an area use.

This is only one example of many innovative tactics being employed by hunters that help to evolve our hunting methods. So called "magic bullet" tactics come and go with only a few of them proving themselves over time.

In my opinion, the best tactic for consistent success is to scout an area in late winter or early spring until you've found where the deer bed during daylight hours, then leave them alone. Not disturbing a daytime

bedding area is critical to assuring deer will return there, so scout in early spring and leave it alone until it's time to hunt it during the deer season. A deer spends 90% of daylight hours bedded down. These places are chosen because they offer security and that is the single most important factor in deer occupying them. Once that security has been breached a time or two, a deer will abandon it to find a more secure spot elsewhere.

Knowing where deer spend their time during daylight is the most important information a hunter can have to be successful in developing an effective plan to hunt it. The best plan involves intercepting the deer as it travels to and from its day bed. Be it on public or private land, locating a secure day bedding spot is golden and the most consistent deer producer of any tactic I know of. Like "playing the wind," it has withstood the test of time. 🍖

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

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TOM CARPENTER

Cubs Corner

With hunting in danger, you are the solution

If you think that headline is about anti-hunters, you are wrong. Anti-hunters don't present any real danger to one of our favorite Wisconsin activities that is for some a pastime, for others a passion, and for many of us, the basis for a lifestyle.

Anti-hunters have been around since I was a boy in the ancient 1970s, and those folks haven't made any headway. If you spend any time worrying about the future of hunting, channel the energy to something that matters: Hunter numbers and hunting participation are both dropping at an alarming rate. While hunting won't expire in our lifetime, it will affect you through fewer dollars for conservation. Hunters are the best friends of wildlife and wild places. Always have been, always will be.

On a short-sighted, "me-first" level, dwindling hunter numbers might seem like a good thing. Fewer hunters means less competition at your favorite hunting spot, more game for you and maybe your bird dog to hunt, and a heavier game bag or sagging meatpole for you, right?

I hope you don't think like that. We could fill this issue of *On Wisconsin Outdoors* with information on the alarming decline of hunting, but let's hold things to a few key facts.

In 1982, U.S. hunter numbers peaked at 17 million. In 1991 there were 14.1 million. In 2016, the most recent year for which official numbers are available, only 11.5 million took to the field. Coupled with a growing population, the percentage of hunters in the U.S. population has plummeted from over 10 percent to less than 4 percent since 1982.

What's happening? As the baby boomers age, they naturally begin to slow down and fade out of hunting's ranks. The millennials and following generations are not picking hunting up at the same rate. That's the short version of a much larger story, but it's a sound summary.

Even more alarming are statistics for small game hunting. In 1991, there were 7.6 million small game license holders. The most recent figure? 3.5 million. Less than half.




The future of hunting and conservation in this country depends on you and who you bring to the outdoor lifestyle now.

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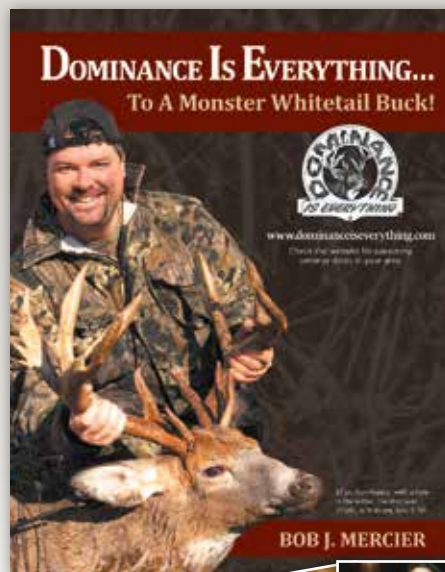
It's up to us – you, me, everyone – to embark on a mission: to get another hunter hooked. Here's why. Hunters are, and have always been, our country's most committed conservationists. We squawk loudest when bad things start to happen on the landscape, and we put our own money out there to make a difference via licenses, game stamps, self-imposed taxes on equipment, and memberships in (and generous donations to) great organizations such as Pheasants Forever, Ducks Unlimited, National Wild Turkey Federation, the Ruffed Grouse Society, Whitetails Unlimited, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation and many others.

So here's an autumn challenge to you, and it's so simple. Get somebody hunting. Kids, grandkids and relatives count, of course. But what may count more is a person who otherwise wouldn't have the chance to hunt. Young adults may be best, folks with a conservation mindset, an interest in nature and the outdoors, and maybe the funds to get started, but not the opportunity to go or mentor to teach them.

No matter who you introduce, don't just take them once and call it good. Take them under your wing, get them started, share your knowledge. As hunter numbers fade, so will the collective voice for conservation in our country. How much do you value wildlife, wild places and the hunting lifestyle? Make it your new mission to make a new hunter. It starts this fall. 

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

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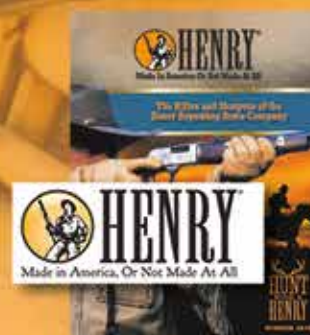
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GARY GREENE

Memories from an Old Hunter

Saying goodbye to Dookie

A South Dakota farmer once described her as a “Plodder.” I didn’t see that as a compliment, although it’s safe to state that she never was a gymnast in the field. During her hunting career, my yellow lab Dookie had accumulated numerous physical ailments, including a torn dog’s ACL, double-hip dysplasia, bad arthritis, diabetes and finally seizures. In her prime, she had a great nose, loved the hunt and hated those nasty pheasants.

At Scuppernong on December 11, 2014, I took her out briefly for her last public hunting grounds’ pheasant hunt. It was sad for me, because I knew there were no remaining hunts in that timeworn body. She was almost ten years old and her body was twice that. It already was nearing sunset and we only had about 30 minutes of available hunting time. She could barely manage through the thicker cover, but she was really enjoying going through the motions. It was late in the season, so I didn’t think there were any recently stocked pheasants, but I

wanted her to share some fun with me in the field.

Ten minutes into our hunt, old Dookie put on the after burners and moved as fast as the grandma making choices in the Piggly Wiggly deli section. She managed to flush a nice rooster, which I shot and she proudly retrieved. My thoughts immediately went to all the hunts we had previously shared and I smiled through my tears.

But she wasn’t finished; just minutes later she got birdy again and, using her remaining energy, she flushed a hen – you can shoot those there – I made the shot and she made a slow, but efficient retrieve. Somehow I could see her relaying to me that the hunt was good, but now it’s over.

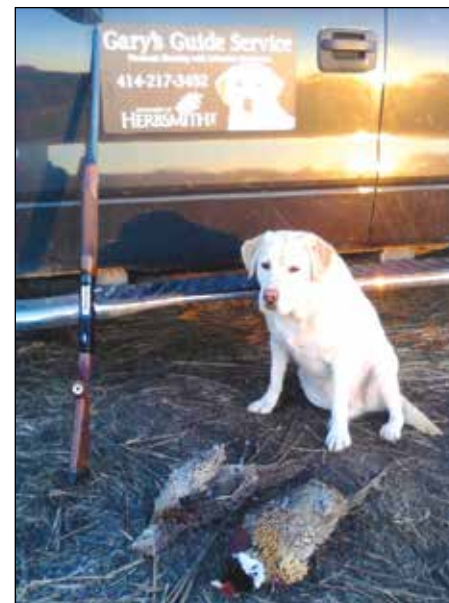
After our twenty-minute hunt, she barely made it back to the truck, but she proudly posed for a snapshot in front of her picture on my door magnet, with the two pheasants, my Benelli and the sunset reflecting on my truck doors. It was quite a night for my Dookie and me. When we got home, as

I was lifting her out of the truck, my wife Chris said, “I thought you were just taking Dookie for a walk, I didn’t figure you would come home with birds.” Neither did I.

Dookie’s original name was Brooke. We fondly called her Dumb-a... Brooke. Eventually, I combined the words and Dook was created. Then with even more affection, I stretched it to Dookie, but she answered to most anything.

Recently, old Dookie had severe problems walking in and out of the house, but she ate well and lived happily on her anti-seizure meds and insulin shots. She was born on groundhog day back in February, 2005 and she got to see her 13th shadow again this year. A few weeks ago, her body finally gave in to the seizures and we lost Dookie.

We have lost two dogs in the last year and we still have four labs in our home. Still, our home is pretty lonely without that 90-pound old yellow lab shedding hair all over the house. We had her cremated and



Greene's yellow Lab Dookie after her last hunt in 2014.

her ashes have been spread around my headstone on our hill overlooking the lake.

Dookie along with several of my labs have their faces carved into my headstone. I wanted to honor them as family members. 🐾

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



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—Gregg Borneman

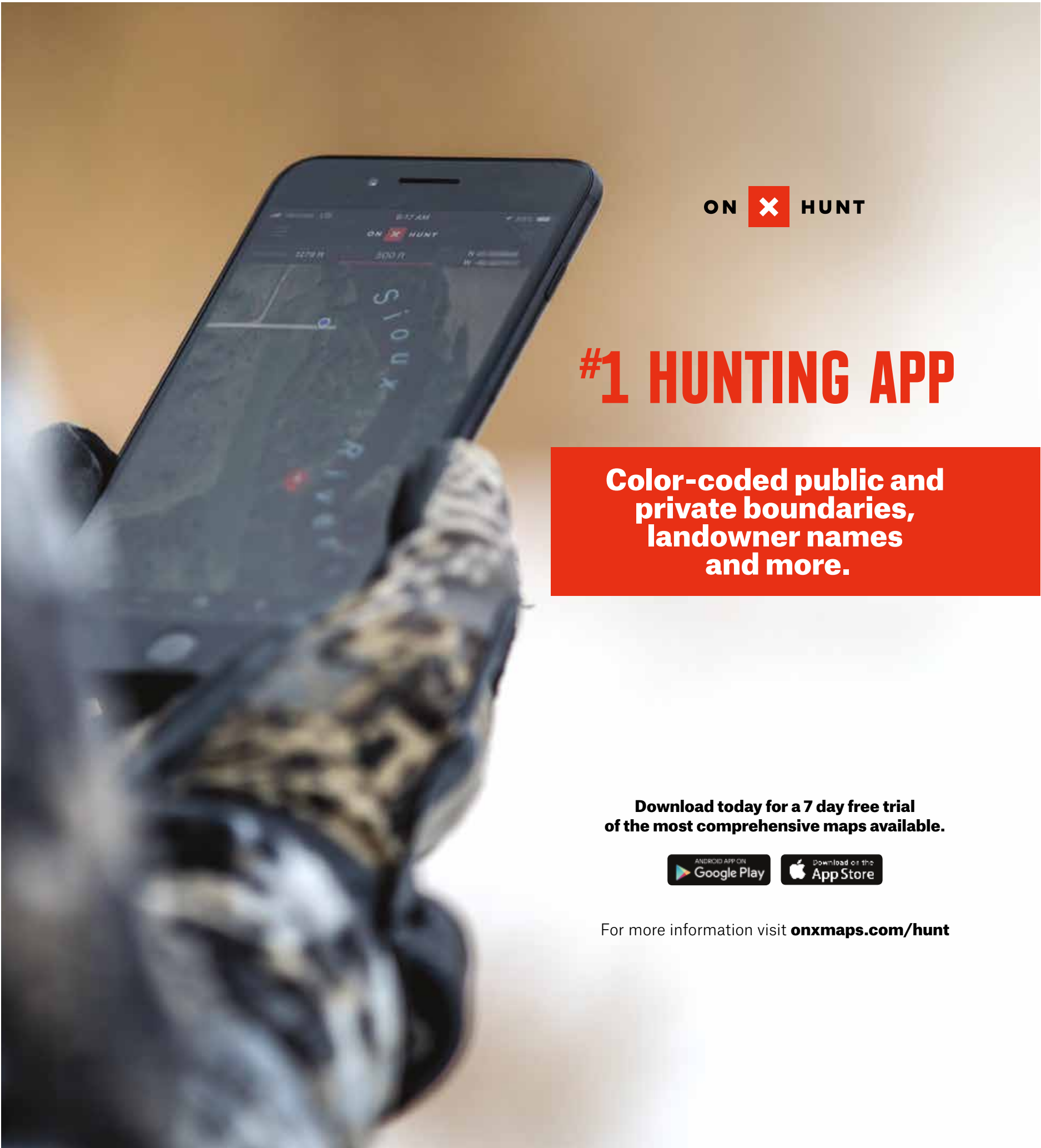
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TOM MUELLER

The Conditioned Retrieve

Pup's early retrieving lessons as important as obedience

Hunters buy a retriever because we want it to retrieve our waterfowl and upland game, but they often also do double duty. We play the hunt test game. That was our vision when we first brought a puppy home. So, we go about the training process, teaching obedience and trying to get the little bugger to retrieve. The obedience part is the easy part. The retrieving part...not so much.

As our little hunting buddy gets a bit older, it's starting to get a little sassier, and not too keen on returning right to you with the dummy anymore. More often the pup wants to run right by, or spit it out just before it gets to you. These are typical puppy responses from a growing retriever. But how do you fix it?

Often, you didn't start conditioning your pup to retrieve soon enough. At the very beginning of training it's more important to start the puppy retrieving even before obedience. By doing that you start conditioning the pup to hold onto the dummy or toy and bring it right to you while holding onto it until you take it. You are "conditioning" your pup to retrieve properly, making it a solid habit that will be there for the rest of its days.

Once that habit is steadfastly instilled, your retriever will usually return to you and deliver the dummy to hand. By doing that, you are shortening a necessary training step down the road or possibly even eliminating it. But if you didn't make that



Working with my daughter Jennifer's black lab Aspen. With some consistent effort even a family pet can learn to hold onto a dummy.

effort in the beginning to get your pup to hold onto a dummy and deliver it right to you, what is the process to correct it?

Most of the time this issue can be fixed by playing a keep away game with the puppy or young dog. On a 10-to-12 foot lead, tease the dog with a dummy to get it to try and snatch it from your hand. Occa-

sionally, let the dog grab the dummy and encourage it to hold onto it. When it grabs it, tell it "Fetch." Walk around on lead for a bit telling the pup "Hold." Then encourage the dog to come to you so you can take the dummy while giving it your release command.

When the pup comes to you, pet it and

praise it and again encourage it to "Hold" before taking the dummy. This is a game of keep away that you're playing, so you want to put a lot of energy into it and make it fun and exciting. Eventually, when your dog is readily taking and holding onto the dummy until you take it, you can throw very short, little retrieves for it while encouraging it to "Hold" and deliver it to you.

If you think about it, a retrieve can be broken down into two or three or even four concepts. Retriever pups already instinctively know the first three and do them quite well. Run out to the fall, pick up the dummy or bird, and run back to their owner. It's the very last part, delivering to hand, that some pups prefer not to do. Genetically, most pups would prefer to drop it or lay down and chew on it because it's not exciting to them anymore. Two habits we hunters want to break them of right from the beginning. 🐾

Tom Mueller has been avidly training retrievers since the early 1980s. His passion has evolved into helping others achieve the satisfaction that he has gained from the experience. For questions regarding retriever training, contact Tom at winddancer.rtrvs@hotmail.com.

TOM CARPENTER

Badger Birds *Eastern Towhee*

The eastern towhee is actually a native sparrow of thick woods and brushy places. This handsome sparrow hunts in the forest duff with a distinctive hop-forward, jump-back sequence that exposes the bare ground below, revealing insect prey to be nabbed.

Towhees will also eat wild berries and seeds in season – blackberries, grapes, raspberries, mulberries, ragweed, weed seeds, small acorns and other small nuts – once that bounty of forage hits the ground. Early autumn is a good time to see eastern towhees Wisconsin's hardwood forests.

LOOK for a striking bird with black head and back, white belly, vibrant red eyes, and a distinctive, bright, rufous-colored side. The wings and tail feature white patches that flash in flight. Females look similar, but brown replaces the black.

LISTEN for the towhee's namesake call: to-whoee. As with all native sparrows, the song is lovely: a wavering *drink-yer-teeeeeee* tune.

CREATE a brush pile in an odd corner, instead of throwing the material or burning it. Towhees and other cover-loving birds will appreciate the hiding place.



TO ATTRACT towhees, scatter shelled corn, crushed crackers, peanut meats, sunflower hearts or watermelon seeds on the ground next to a thicket.

DID YOU KNOW that eastern and western (known as spotted) towhees used to be considered one species, the rufous-sided towhee? They are now considered separate, although they freely interbreed in the plains states. In Wisconsin, almost all towhees seen are of the eastern variety. 🐾

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

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TOM CARPENTER

Seeking the Straight Flush

Fall food sources key to more grouse

Whether you are an obsessive grouse fanatic, occasional partridge chaser or somewhere in between, you will find more birds and produce more flushes when you consider grouse feeding habits and food preferences in your hunting strategy.

September Into Early October: Berries and Fruits

Don't fall into the lazy hunter's trap of hunting only the convenient midday hours. You'll find more birds when you hunt feeding periods that occur during the first and last couple hours of light. Once you agree that hunting early and late is great, concentrate on finding foods that grouse like and locating feeding areas where they like to be. In September, many berries and fruits are ripe. These make prime grouse food. The attractiveness of berries and fruits continues into October and only wanes as their supply dwindles.

Gray dogwood is a grouse favorite. These small, round berries - colored gray, blue-gray, green-gray or light green - grow in bunches on low-hanging bushes. Many dogwood subspecies have bark that is colored red or burgundy.

Dogwood grows in low or moist areas and on the timber's edge where it transitions to marshes and wetlands. As the berries drop, they make easy and nutritious pickings for hungry grouse. Years with only a limited number of berry-producing bushes available can be great for hunting because the birds concentrate on those productive patches.

Grouse love other berries too: winter-berries, snowberries, highbush blueberries, highbush cranberries, rose hips and others. You don't need to know the exact species name of every berry, but you do need to be on the lookout for berries in general.

To locate berry patches, scan for splashes of color as you hunt, then work those areas extra thoroughly. Red is a common and visible berry color, with blues and purples close behind. Near field edges, grouse like



Following food sources through the hunting season will lead you to more opportunities on grouse.

sumac berries and wild grapes.

Crabapple is a top fruit for attracting grouse. If you see a crabapple tree ahead, get ready for some action. I annually visit specific coverts where I know crabapple trees abound.

Mid- to Late-October: Greens, Oaks and Aspens

Once October hits its stride and frost starts changing the landscape, ruffed grouse begin shifting toward their winter food supply of assorted tree buds and catkins. But this is a transition time, and a wide variety of foods are still consumed. Plenty of berries and fruits hang on until midseason.

Grouse love greens (plenty are still available as autumn builds), and partridge will eat the leaves of many species of low-growing plants. Clover is a favorite. One Wisconsin study of the contents of ruffed grouse taken in autumn showed that 21% of total contents consisted of clover. The only single food source with a higher incidence was aspen leaves and buds at 29%.

Other favorite grouse greens include the leaves of wild strawberries, dandelion and plantain. These plants all like some




Ruffed grouse in particular in the early season provide some of the most challenging wing shooting in Wisconsin. Roosting birds sometime cooperate for photographers too.

sun, so look for them - and clover - along trails, clearings, meadows and other forest openings.

One reason grouse love hanging around tag alders is that the sun-dappled forest floor creates a friendly environment in which succulent greens can grow. Grouse will also eat tag alder buds.

Oaks attract grouse, too. Acorns make ideal grouse food because the nuts are highly nutritious and good-sized; they fill a grouse's crop fast.

Aspen, also affectionately known as popple, is a grouse magnet. If the age of the stand is right, the cover is ideal for grouse, but the trees also provide the birds with highly nutritious food. In the Wisconsin study mentioned previously, 29% of crop contents were aspen (buds and leaves); that percentage increased in the diet as autumn moved toward winter. 

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

Explore Wisconsin



Port Washington has the charter captains, and the shoreline, for great fall fishing.



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Let there be fish in this vacationland, fighting rainbow trout, tasty pan fish, lunging northern and walleye. Let there be a town, friendly and hospitable where I can enjoy the latest movie, stock up with foods and supplies and savor a flavorful meal.

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Explore Wisconsin



HAYWARD AREA

Fall in Love with Hayward

As easy as one, two, three


Anne of Green Gables said, "I'm so glad that I live in a world where there are Octobers." I would have to agree! In Sawyer County, the leaves are bright oranges and reds and the air is getting crisp with fall weather. Hayward will get into the spirit with the Chequamegon Fat Tire Fest, Fall Festival and the Gourmet Wine Tasting on October 18. With the hues of orange and reds taking over the picturesque forests, people are looking for ways to take advantage of the season. Below are three things that you can do to embrace the autumn season.

1. Take a nature walk. Hayward is home to beautiful hiking and biking trails. The HASTA Hospital Trails provide countless photo ops with the colorful trees and lakeside views. The pedestrian trail is paved and bike and dog friendly; it will lead you around the edge of town and give you many opportunities to explore the unique spots in Hayward. Whether you want to take a path down by the lake or explore the historic Birkebeiner trail, Sawyer County has many scenic trails to explore.

2. Enjoy great food with a view. Hay-

ward has delicious restaurants of all variety and many provide a view of the beautiful outdoors. Several restaurants have outdoor seating offering spectacular views. Many of the resorts in the area provide a warm and friendly atmosphere combined with gorgeous surroundings. The drive out to top-rated supper clubs is sure to give you a fall color fix.

3. Drive one of our self-guided fall color tours. There are six different tours that you can take. Fall is a great time to get out and enjoy the stunning scenery that Sawyer County has to offer. The tours range in distance and can take you through incredible places like the Chequamegon-Nicolet Forest or around the Chippewa Flowage. This is one experience you will not want to miss when visiting Sawyer County.

Whether you are driving by the Tiger Cat Flowage and soaking up the foliage or enjoying our up-north dining, Sawyer County has loads of fall fun to offer. 

For more information check out www.haywardlakes.com or 715-634-4801 Hayward Lakes Visitors and Convention Bureau, Sawyer County, WI USA



Land and water trips and tours both offer the stunning colors and other attractions of the Hayward area.

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SUZETTE CURTIS**Recipes with Suzette****'Tis the season! No – not Christmas – football season!**

As the frenzy begins, many of us are planning our Sunday afternoon football parties, or if we're lucky enough, our stadium tailgate parties. Either way, appetizers are easy additions to any menu. Instead of the "usual" suspects, switch things up with some wild game and try a couple of new recipes. Enjoy!

"Shrimp" Cocktail

Sheepshead fillets**

Cocktail Sauce:

½ tsp Salt

1 Cup Ketchup

10 Peppercorns

2 T Horseradish

1 Garlic clove

1 tsp lemon juice

1 Lemon

½ tsp Worcestershire sauce

2 Bay leaves

Dash or two of Hot sauce

1 bunch fresh Parsley

Fill pot of water to within an inch or two from the top. Add salt, peppercorns, garlic, bay leaves and parsley to pot. Add the zest and juice from the lemon. Bring pot to boil; cover and reduce heat to a slow boil for 15 to 20 minutes.

Meanwhile, prepare cocktail sauce by combining all of the ingredients in a glass jar or covered container. Refrigerate until serving.

Slice Sheepshead fillets into 1-inch pieces. Drop into pot and continue to boil 2 to 3 minutes until no longer translucent. Drain and place fish into a sealed container. Refrigerate at least four hours before serving.

**Sheepshead has a firm texture much like shrimp, so it stands up to the boiling process and maintains its shape for easy serving with either toothpicks or a fork.

Venison & Olive Cheese Spread

1 8oz package Cream Cheese

1/4 cup Pimiento stuffed green

2 T Mayonnaise

olives, finely chopped

1 T Onion, finely minced

1/4 cup cooked Venison, finely chopped

Combine all ingredients in medium sized container. Cover and refrigerate at least four hours before serving.

Serve with your favorite crackers, pita chips, or bread sticks.

Buffalo Pheasant Strips

4 Pheasant breasts

Buffalo Sauce:

1 cup flour

¼ cup Bourbon

1 T Salt

1/3 cup Frank's Red Hot Sauce**

1 tsp pepper

1/3 cup Brown sugar

4 T Vegetable oil

2 T Butter, melted

Bleu Cheese dressing:

1 T Honey

Celery sticks

1 tsp minced Onion

1 tsp minced Garlic

Cut Pheasant breasts into 1-inch slices; dredge in mixture of flour, salt & pepper. Heat oil in skillet over medium high heat. Add Pheasant slices and fry until golden brown on each side. Remove from oil and drain on paper towels.

Combine all sauce ingredients in saucepan. Cook over low heat for about ten minutes, stirring occasionally. Pour warm sauce over Pheasant strips in large bowl or platter.

Serve with Bleu Cheese dressing and celery sticks.

**Adjust hot sauce more or less to your taste preference.

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 this with great expertise. Contact her at revipesbysuzette@onwisconsinoutdoors.com.



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. revipesbysuzette@onwisconsinoutdoors.com.

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3riversarchery.com



IMPERIAL WHITETAIL WINTER-GREENS

If you're reading this and haven't put your food plot in yet, or you're if thinking of adding another one, it's not too late. September is on the tail end of planting this mix here in Wisconsin. Do it now and you'll be ready for bow hunting the rut and gun season. Full of brassicas and augmented with turnips, this mix is designed to withstand the cold weather that will be coming soon. Continues to stand up in the snow. Takes root and grows quickly. (\$39.98 for 3 pounds)

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Price County September – October Did you know, the flowages of the North Fork of the Flambeau River near Park Falls offer a unique opportunity to fish Lake Sturgeon in September? The legal size limit to harvest your catch is 60 inches.

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STUART WILKERSON

Concealed Carry Get your facts straight

News reports featuring the right to “Stand Your Ground” and protect you and yours appear on a regular basis in the news media. Where they don’t appear is in Wisconsin State Statutes that pertain to the use of deadly force in life threatening situations.

If you think you are under no obligation to retreat under threat of death or great bodily injury, think again. Stand Your Ground (SYG) doctrine may be true in some states, but it is not the case in Wisconsin.

According to the legal defense program known as U.S. Law Shield, SYG is a popular term for the legal doctrine of “No Duty to Retreat.” Unlike some states, Wisconsin citizens do, indeed, have a duty to retreat. Wisconsin citizens, as written in state statutes, must reasonably believe that force is necessary to terminate an attack. When responding to an attack, Wisconsin State Statute (Paragraph) 939.48(1) makes clear that citizens may only use enough force necessary to prevent or terminate an attack. That could, of course, mean defending yourself with a firearm.

Wisconsin law does not provide specific crimes against which deadly force may be used in self-defense. The law states force may be used in self-defense if you reasonably believe such force is necessary to prevent imminent death or great bodily harm to yourself. Such crimes would likely create a reasonable belief that deadly force is necessary to prevent death or great physical harm and are used for illustrative purposes.

If you have a firearm for self-protection, you should know what and what doesn’t constitute the acceptable use of deadly force in Wisconsin. An excellent primer on this topic is U.S. Law Shield’s booklet, “When Can I Legally Shoot? The law of deadly force in Wisconsin” is available at Shorty’s Shooting Sports in West Allis. This publication does a great job summarizing under what circumstances it may be legal to use deadly force, the possible legal and financial consequences of doing so, what to do in the aftermath of a deadly force incident, and other issues that often follow in the wake of a self-defense or use of deadly force incident.

One thing that will almost surely follow the use of a deadly or other force incident is a trial. Sure, a definition of what legally justifies the use of deadly force can be found in Wisconsin Statutes, but that doesn’t mean a criminal or civil case won’t be filed against the responder. One person’s justifiable shooting might be considered murder by someone else. A jury may ultimately decide the matter.

The chances of ever having to put a firearm to use in a self-defense situation may be relatively remote – but it happens across the country on a daily basis. In the event that it does,

it’s a good idea to be prepared. This is why Mike “Shorty” Govas is a vendor for U.S. Law Shield’s Legal Defense for Self-Defense Insurance. The service provides a 24/7/365 emergency hotline answered by attorneys nation-wide versed in Wisconsin criminal and civil law. A U.S. Law for Self Defense attorney will provide legal representation for all criminal investigations and charges and civil proceedings for any covered event.

Legal firearm owners do have a right to protect themselves and loved ones, but need to be aware of the possible consequences of doing what’s legally right. U.S. Lawshield offers comprehensive protection for legal defense, whether it is a minor accident or life-altering situation.

Cost of a U.S. Law Shield Legal Defense for Self Defense membership starts at only \$10.95 per month for one adult. Other family members, hunting and multiple-state protection can be added for nominal fees. The program has no caps, no limits and no deductibles.

For more information, stop by Shorty’s Shooting Sports in West Allis. 

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

RON STRESING

Picking the Perfect Bird Gun Pheasant, upland game considerations

The race was on! My cousin Ken’s Lab Phantom had chased a rooster into a ditch filled with cattails. With one of us flanking the ditch on either side, we hurried to keep pace with Phantom. We knew the bird was going to bust out of the ditch when it came to an end. As luck would have it, the rooster flushed on my side of the ditch. As it climbed for altitude, I swung on him with my SKB auto-loader and canceled his flight. We continued hunting the Richard Bong State Rec Area in Kenosha that day and harvested three more birds.


So what makes for the ideal pheasant and upland game gun? Most folks will agree the main attributes are light weight and fast handling. Shorter barrels like 24 or 26 inches in length and interchangeable chokes will make the gun more versatile. Not surprisingly, a gun that works well on pheasant, grouse, and quail will also work wonders on the sporting clays range.



Light weight and fast handling features are primary attributes in selecting an upland game gun.

Waterfowl guns vs upland guns: As much as I love the heavy duty pump gun I use to hunt waterfowl, there is no way I want to carry it while hiking through a frozen cattail marsh. Heavy weight shotguns have their place. That place is not on a grouse or pheasant hunt where walking five miles or more is not uncommon. The majority of waterfowl hunts are

CONTINUED ON PAGE 39




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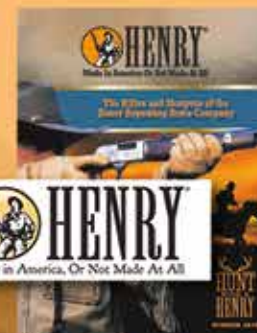
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SKB SHOTGUNS

Presents Firearms Info from Ron Stresing

RON STRESING

Boy Scouts and the Shooting Sports

Safari Club International grant makes range possible

The Pottawatomie Boy Scout Camp is nestled in the rolling hills of the Kettle Moraine State Forest. Just four miles out of the town of Dundee on Highway 67, it borders scenic Long Lake. Besides camping, swimming, and all the usual activities the camp offers, Boy Scouts get a chance to earn merit badges in the shotgun, archery, and rifle shooting sports.

The modern state-of-the-art facility features a rifle range, archery range, and a shotgun area with trap, skeet and five-stand sporting clays. The shotgun range also has a separate area for Scouts to learn basic shotgun handling, form and safety. This is also where they break clay targets for the first time. A generous grant of \$178,000 from the Safari Club International made this range possible.

My son Adam received training as an NRA certified shotgun instructor and worked there this summer teaching Scouts to shoot. I asked to observe and was allowed to watch the entire process, including working with students who had never held a real firearm before. The shotguns selected by the Scouts are the durable Remington 11-87 in 20 gauge. This combination of gauge and semi-auto action was selected for its low recoil. Herter's brand 20 gauge 7/8 ounce loads are the ammunition of choice.

Safety: A number of things impressed me about the pro-



An instructor shows how it's done.

cess. First was the complete emphasis on safety and safe use of a firearm. The instructor showed the safe way to proceed with every step of loading and unloading a firearm, trigger and muzzle discipline. Scouts were told what to do in the case of a misfire, hang-fire, or "squib" load. Basic maintenance and cleaning of a shotgun were also covered. Scouts are required to break 12 out of 25 to earn the shotgun merit badge.

Form: Basic shooting form is a big deal when using a shotgun. The lack of a rear sight requires proper placement of the gun in the "shoulder pocket" and placing the face on the stock. The Scouts use a method that opens up

the pocket. Proper shooting stance is also taught. A lot of mistakes that result in lost targets or missed game birds are the direct result of poor shooting form. Being taught the right way prevents learning a lifetime's worth of bad habits. As much as I'm glad my dad and grandfather taught me to shoot, I wish I had this sort of instruction available when I was that age.

The training in safety, safe handling and shooting form all come together at the moment when the instructor has the Scout stand in the shooting box and call for a bird. I had the honor of watching a young man named Collin call for a target and then crush it with a center-pattern hit.

It was the first time he had ever fired a shotgun and his reaction was priceless. The recoil of the shotgun sort of knocked his hearing protectors sideways, but he was smiling from ear to ear.

A big "thank you" to the staff at Pottawatomie Boy Scout Camp, my guide Larry Winklehake, and my son Adam Stresing for inviting me. Thanks also to Safari Club International for investing in future shooters. 🦋

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.

SHERRY QUAMME

Fall Kayak and Canoe Country

Mississippi River and the Driftless Coast

Have you wondered what it would be like to spend your day or even a week exploring the rivers and valleys that are the Mississippi River and Driftless Coast of Wisconsin? Now is the time. With rivers like the Mississippi, Wisconsin, Kickapoo, Black, St. Croix or lakes like Onalaska within driving distance from most parts of our State, the fun times on the water can be enjoyed especially in the Fall. Whether you are an avid outdoor enthusiast looking for a week's adventure or a family seeking a short paddle on a beautiful afternoon, you will find it. Go for it.

The bold and deep colors of Fall will welcome you to your river destination and reward you at every turn of your favorite river or your special lake. Watch for the raptors as they migrate south along the Mississippi River Flyway. Spot those eagle nests with the adults perched nearby to



assure the juveniles are hunting for prey and ready to be independent. Have your camera ready as you see Canvasback ducks grouping on the Upper Mississippi River Refuge/Flyway preparing to make their way to their winter destinations. You will also see swans, white pelicans, many species of ducks and geese while you paddle.

Explore Wisconsin



Pull into a cove or onto a sandy beach for a shore lunch or stop at a riverside/lakeside eatery for that glass of Wisconsin beverage, cheese curds, juicy burger, snacks and good ole' Pub Food. Dress for comfort and pack your binoculars. Be flexible.

There are over 300 species of birds, 51 species of mammals and 119 species of fish found in the Upper Mississippi National Wildlife and Fish Refuge. The area has over 300 bald eagle nests and 15 colonies of herons and egrets. And, 40% of America's ducks, geese, swans and other waterfowl fly along the Mississippi River on their fall and spring migrations. This is a birders paradise.

Be bold. Get outdoors and have a ball this Fall. 🦋

If you need gear, tips, river choices and more, check out www.wigr.com, www.explorelacrosse.com, www.driftlesswisconsin.com, for information.

STRESING, *FROM PAGE 36*

conducted from a boat or sitting a blind. One of the reasons heavy shotguns are so popular with waterfowl hunter is that the heavy weight helps damp down the recoil for 3 inch or even 3 ½ inch shells. Most upland game is hunted with classic 2 3/4 inch field loads with shot charges that run between 1 ounce and 1 ¼ ounces. Recoil is nowhere near the factor it is when shooting 3-inch goose loads. The longer sighting plane of a long barrel is of no advantage to a grouse or pheasant hunter who has split seconds to swing on and engage a bird.

Double barrel vs semi-auto: Double guns are the classic choice for hunting pheasants and other upland game. The big advantage over a semi-auto is having two chokes settings. A more open choke for your first and closer shot, and a tighter choke for your follow-up shot. You can also load a lighter shell for your first shot and a heavier shell for follow up shots. For example, when I take my 20 gauge over/under out for pheasants, I load a light 7/8th ounce load of 6 shot in the modified barrel and a one ounce load of 5 shot in the full choke barrel. With the two different chokes and loads, I'm good on any pheasant I kick up between 15 – 40 yards. A semi-auto offers two or more follow up shots, but with the same choke setting. What I do when I carry my semi-auto is to load a lighter load for the first shot and follow with two heavier loads. Standard pheasant hunting procedure is usually a 1 1/8 ounce load for the first shot backed up by two 1 ¼ ounce loads. As most experienced hunters will tell you, that third shot seldom harvests game.

In the end personal preference also plays a big part when choosing your ideal pheasant gun. I know some folks who would not want to be caught dead carrying a semi-auto for pheasants or grouse. If you are comfortable toting your trusty pump gun around the field, why not? My son Adam insisted on carrying his 20 gauge pump instead of his 20 gauge over/under and made a great shot on his first pheasant. I killed my first pheasant with a Stevens 16 gauge single-shot – a gun that is hardly anyone's idea of an ideal pheasant gun, but it did the job.

More than anything, enjoy your time spent in the field chasing those long-tailed birds. Nothing is as exciting as watching a good dog working a hot scent and sharing the moment with friends and family. Take lots of shells, water, and treats for the dogs, hunt safe and have fun! 🐾

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.

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The advertisement features three SKB shotgun models: 90TSS, CENTURY III, and RS300. Each model is shown in two configurations: a full-length view and a shorter, more compact view. The background is a light green gradient. The SKB logo is prominently displayed at the top. The text 'COMPETITION GUNS DESIGNED TO FIT YOU' is written in a bold, sans-serif font. The model names are in a large, stylized font. At the bottom, there is a logo for 'LEFT HAND RIGHT HAND' and a website address.

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