



WISCONSIN WALLEYE RUNS!

On Wisconsin Outdoors

with the

Dick Ellis Experts

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DICK ELLIS

Laughter is the Best Medicine

A thank you from the Publisher & Micah

So how do Micah and I thank you? Over two decades of writing a Wisconsin-syndicated outdoor column and 12 years of publishing OWO, it's not often my scribbling strikes a collective audience chord that initiates the reaction I received when writing about Micah's cancer. So we're not the only ones who like our dog? What a shocker...

Micah and Lori and I have received well-wishes, and advice, and prayers. I have heard from quite a few of you who have cried for us as they follow how our journey unwinds. Grown men let us know they just let it go, almost without exception with memories of their own dogs fueling the emotion.

This love thing and the pain that ultimately has to come with it is worth the trade. We all know when we bring the puppy home to be part of the family that the family is going to be missing something terribly in time that goes by like a blink. Doesn't hurt less, but it's why we go out and adopt another pup, maybe tomorrow, maybe later when we're ready.

So thank you. The time you spent sending us your notes means more than you can ever know. And every letter has been like its own shot of medicine.

Micah is doing well. He doesn't look his old handsome self. We couldn't care less. We monitor the oral tumor, and his comfort. His non-existent pain today will one day too soon tell us when that's enough. We walk hard for workouts four miles every day with him 30 yards out in front with my soft leather mitten in his mouth the whole way instead of his preferred stick. He'll wheel on me a dozen times during the walk just to launch his mock



attack, only to spin again after the collision and take his rightfully earned spot out in front.

We hunt Wern Valley. I'm a little more selfish today. Instead of sharing him each time, I stole him for myself once or twice, and let the field time burn into my memory. We have received much appreciated dietary advice from End of the Leash owner Suzie Bower. Suzie launched her Mukwonago/Pewaukee business when facing a diagnosis of lung cancer for her Gordon Setter Emma, and "unacceptable" four month life expectancy prediction. Suzie's research and care took Emma to six years (www.endoftheleashblog.com). I'll take her advice.

My sister Barb and I took her aging lab, Dylan and my ailing Micah to feel the remedies offered at Think Pawsitive, a state of the art indoor canine fitness and sports



The nice thing about our dogs, their place in the heart doesn't change because age or illness takes a toll. Micah before and after.

center in Waukesha (www.thinkpawsitivedog.com). We chose K-9 Splash in the swim center and the heated 41 x 21 foot pool perfect for our 90 pound veteran field warriors. I felt like diving in myself on that cold winter's morning.

It's all been good, so let's exit this chapter of our journey laughing. Micah and I were sitting in the veterinarian's waiting room when a woman hurried up behind him, reaching out in greeting with the words "What a beautiful dog...". When Mike turned toward her, her startled, involuntary reaction sent her hands in the air in correlations with the exclamation..."ahhh". It was the same reaction I received when asking Mary Lou Mueller to dance at 8th grade graduation. I didn't laugh then, but I can assure you that sometimes laughter is the best medicine now.

Last week we were on the ice in Waukesha County fishing when Micah approached a woman in his own friendly greeting. "What kind of a dog is that?!" she exclaimed. "Oh my gosh...what happened to his face?!"

Grin and bear it, as they say. I did. No harm was intended or taken. And actually, it was another dose of that unexpected medicine.

Thanks again for yours. 🐾

On Wisconsin
Outdoors

With the Dick Ellis Experts

HUNTING • FISHING • TRAVEL
EXPLORE WISCONSIN

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Madison Classics Swap Meet & Car Show

Celebrating 43 Years in Jefferson

Spring is here and so is the 43rd Annual Jefferson Swap Meet & Car Show on April 24 - 26. The show will be held at the Jefferson County Fair Park located at 503 N. Jackson Ave., Jefferson, Wisconsin, just off Highway 18 in Jefferson, Wisconsin.

Madison Classics has always strived to provide a great place for auto enthusiasts to buy/sell/display a variety of auto related items and vehicles. The very first Madison Classics Spring Show was held in February of 1977 at the Dane County Coliseum in Madison, Wisconsin. The day of the swap meet it snowed over six inches, but nonetheless a swap meet was born!

After a few years in Madison, Gary Esse (founder of Madison Classics) decided he wanted to find a better venue and found a very promising fairgrounds just 28 miles away in Jefferson, Wisconsin. In 1980 the Madison Classics event moved to Jefferson County Fair Park where the event is now held twice a year and is marked with well over 3,100 outdoor swap spaces along with hundreds of indoor spaces set on approximately 99 acres.

The event draws thousands of vendors and spectators from just about every state. There are folks that travel from as far as Australia and Europe each year for the swap meets! Whether it is a professional vendor or hobbyist cleaning out their garage, the vendors at the Jefferson Swap Meets



Do you remember fender well headers, I-beam front axles and 671 blowers? Relive the past at the Madison Classics Jefferson Car Show.

know one thing – this is *the* auto swap meet to attend in Wisconsin.

Madison Classics Spring Jefferson event will feature Drag Cars. The feature cars will be displayed in the main Activity Center Building and be sure to look for a larger display of vehicles in front of the main building lined up Saturday and Sunday morning behind the Show Car registration tent. "It's a tradition!" Gary Esse stated. "The City of Jefferson and surrounding communities have shown great support for our events and we have made many lifelong relationships here.

We greatly appreciate that and thank everyone for 43 years and many more to come!"

The Swap Meet and Car Corral are all three days and the Car Show is Saturday and Sunday. The spectator gates for the Swap Meet and Car Corral are open Friday from 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m., Saturday 6:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m., and Sunday 6:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. The Car Show gate opens at 6:00 a.m. on Saturday and Sunday. All makes and models and specialty vehicles are invited to participate in the Car Show. No pets please. 🐾

For more information, visit us online at www.madisonclassics.com, or call (608) 244-8416.

Car Column Coming...

Attention car show enthusiasts, gear heads, or anyone who feels most at home with his head under a hood. Coming with our May-June issue, read Brad Beglinger's car and truck column that we're launching specifically to offer tips for those who seem to spend half their lives in the garage... by choice.

Watch for Brad's 5-minute video at www.onwisconsinoutdoors.com in rotation with other OWO videos as he takes his 66' Impala from 1000 pieces to awesome machine. You've probably seen Brad and his Impala at Wisconsin's many car shows... right next to his 66' vet. Although he's not very comfortable using his talent to offer unsolicited advice, we hope you'll like what he has to say. Stay tuned.



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PHIL SCHWEIK

Walleye Lockjaw

Springtime rut means changing it up

Springtime river walleyes can be fun, but fickle, and their temperament all depends on current, water temperature and their all-around mood. Two of these things will determine when and where the fish will be, but the third will determine what they are going to eat!

Most anglers know where to look when it comes to locating spring-time walleyes. I like to target deeper water well down river from the dams early in the season during the months of March or early April. As the water temperatures warm up and the fish begin to move to traditional spawning locations, I also move to target shallower locations in the river. Some of

these locations are now in close vicinity of the dams and some are related to shallow rocky stretches down river. All of them have one thing in common; they are in very shallow water, sometimes less than two feet deep.

But the third factor is the X factor, and that is determining what the walleyes are going to eat. With all of the modern day technology and equipment that anglers today utilize, you might think that the fish wouldn't have a chance. You'd be wrong. You still have to convince them that your presentation is what they want to eat.

In the spring, most walleye anglers work a simple combination of a lead-


head jig and minnow. They toss it towards shoreline structure or into deep water pools and slowly drag it back to the boat. It works. But on days when you can't buy a bite, what do you do? Two alternative presentations include slip-drifting with a live bait rig and casting crankbaits. A third go-to tactic may mean simply anchoring and dead-sticking a lindy rig right off the bottom. "May" because these three are just a few of numerous options available.

There are so many different ways to target springtime walleyes, but we're offering a guide's column here, not a book. My main point is, don't get caught in a river rut of trying just one application while on the water. You need to be versatile and have several options at your disposal a few aces in the hole...while spring-time walleye fishing.

On any given day at any given time, any one of these presentations can and will out-produce the others. At the very least,



Monica Schauer and her dad Steve take a photo break while walleye fishing with Phil Schweik.

on even the toughest of days, coming in prepared to present a meal in more ways than one will put fish in the boat. 

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On The Cover

In Wisconsin, outdoor beauty truly is in the eye of the beholder. Just look at our stories and advertisements in this issue of OWO. Flight lessons, car shows, kayak journeys, boat sales and fishing, ATV trail riding, spring gobbler hunting...and on and on. What's your outside pleasure? Photo courtesy of Mark's Media Works and Donahue Super Sports.

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CAPT. LEE HAASCH

Spring-Time in Algoma

Lake Michigan wakes up after long winter

Winter often seems to just drag on, but after a fairly mild 2020, I am looking forward to an early spring and a very early start to the open water fishing season. The magic of the Lake Michigan shoreline is that the lake's water temperatures keep the lakeshore fairly mild throughout the winter months. Once spring arrives, our harbor opens up early and the tributary rivers, like the Ahnapee, open up and we jump right into fishing season!

March and April mean Steelhead fishing in the streams and lots of them. It is not uncommon for seasoned anglers to catch and release a limit of fish on a regular basis. Did you ever have the opportunity to feel a Steelhead (Rainbow Trout) smack your bait, bend your pole totally in half and scream out drag on your reel as it dances downstream in the rapids? If you have not, this just has to be near the top of your bucket list. There is nothing more exhilarating than doing battle, one-on-one, with a 12-pound Steelhead on light tackle.

Not only do the rivers and streams provide early angling opportunities, but the Lake Michigan shoreline is also a hot area in March and April. Giant Brown

Trout and Trophy Lake Trout cruising the shoreline feeding on Gobies in the shallows give anglers both in small boats trolling and shore anglers wading or off the piers opportunities to cash in on some very tasty trout. Anglers trolling with light tackle with stick baits in 12- to 25- feet of water find this time of the year has some of the best shoreline trolling for huge fish. Not to be outdone, die-hard shore fishermen, like in the streams, find the many access areas to Lake Michigan near creek mouths that offer spectacular places to cast with light spinning rods and small spoons. There is no greater thrill that battling trophy-size fish on light tackle while standing waist deep in Lake Michigan.

Experience for yourself the great fishery Lake Michigan has to offer. And if you want BIG fish, check out Algoma! For charter information or fishing reports, visit my website at: www.FishAlgoma.com or call 1-888-966-3474. From Capt. Lee and the crew aboard the Grand Illusion 2, good luck and good fishing!

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



Springtime Lake trout caught in the shallows on light tackle offer anglers trophy opportunities like this 22 pound beauty Capt. Lee held for a photo before a quick release.



Capt. Tyler Yunk sports a typical Steelhead caught on the Ahnapee River for a quick photo before releasing it back into the water for the next angler to enjoy.

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TOM LUBA

Must-Have Bass Jigs

Reserve a place in your tackle box

Fishing used to be simpler. Use a jig and it was most likely a round or “ball” head. Today there are a lot of innovative heads designed to extract fish from certain types of cover. I think it’s called “progress.”

The two jigs reviewed in this issue will help you catch more bass, and possibly other species as well. One is relatively new. The other has been around for a while.

The Swing Jig got noticed first by bass fishermen. Basically it is a football shaped head that has a mobile, rather than a fixed hook. It allows the bait to swing freely behind the head, which makes it look more alive, and thus, more edible.

The swing jig I fish most is a three-eighth or half-ounce size, though there are heavier and lighter versions. I like a Beaver-styled creature trailer, fished weedless on the wide gap worm hook.

What sold me on these heads was an experience on the Wolf River’s during fall smallmouth fishing. I started with regular football heads, and first time out, my initial cast caught a smallmouth. Great start, I thought, but after numerous snags and lost jigs, I decided to re-think the situation.

The next day we fished with a few guests. I followed my friends’ boat and, wanting to use a totally different look,



The slider and the swing head are two bass jigs you should have in your box this season.

rigged a swing jig with a PowerBait Thief, Berkley’s Beaver-styled offering. Remembering the football fiasco, I decided to slowly reel the bait across bottom to keep it out of the rocks. That idea worked fine and we boated three nice bass following behind them. The slow bottom crawl is deadly on river smallmouth, especially as the water is cooling. It also works all season for both species, through areas like shallower riffles, rock points and weedlines.

The second head, the Charlie Brewer Slider, is a bit older, but still productive. My recommendation is the Snagless Pro

Model, which has a hook eye that comes straight out the front of the flat, oval shaped head. The “Z” Bend hook will hold a plastic bait rigged weedless. This head easily slides through weed growth that largemouth love. It’s available in one-sixteenth, one-eighth and one-quarter ounce heads so you can match weights to the depth, weed type and density.

I’m partial to a seven-inch black Power Worm with the slider, with Green Pumpkin second choice. You can use a ton of different trailers, depending on depth, from finesse to normal size. The slider can be used as a swimmer and can also be dropped down if your trailer mimics a bottom dweller. As long as you can feel the bait working through weeds, you’re in the right area.

In today’s world there is certainly no shortage of bass jigs. I like to focus on the ones that will fit my style of fishing. These two jigs are perfect examples. For instance, the three-eighth-ounce swing jig, tipped with the new Berkley PowerBait MaxScent creature bait, was by far the best river presentation I found to get down to bottom to pry loose some fish in very high water this past fall. They’ll always have a place in my tackle box. Definitely give ‘em a try. 🐟

Tom Luba is an open water fisherman, preferably for smallmouth and largemouth bass. In a pinch, every other fish that swims is fair game, too.



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TOM CARPENTER

Stripers!

Springtime White Bass offer action, escape

White bass provide hard-hitting, hard-fighting fishing action for those who know where and how to go about it. "Stripers," as my dad used to call them, come in great numbers, hit viciously, fight doggedly and taste great when caught from the cool waters of spring.

White bass start gathering to spawn when the water temperature passes the 50° F mark, about the time the walleye spawn is ending. Fishing is best when water temperatures hover between 55° F and 60° F, about the time most tree leaves are unfurling.

White bass fishing is another great reason to get outside after a long winter and a spring that never comes fast enough. Consider this adventure:

A warm sun and gentle breeze confirmed that spring was here. The just-greening trees added a punctuation mark to the magnificent blue-skied day as I motored up toward Lock and Dam



Spring whitebass action is often so fast and furious as to provide a perfect target for young anglers learning to fish.

#3 above Lake Pepin. After an hour of searching and probing, I finally found fish - lots of them - on a shallow sandbar in an

eddy well below the dam.

Casting and working a chartreuse jig head baited with a fathead minnow, I began boating a fish on every other cast. They hit with gusto and fought hard against my medium-light rod's flex. Many bass surpassed the one-pound mark.

After a while, searching for even bigger fish, I motored across the river, located a wingdam, and fished the calm-water pocket just upstream of where the rocky structure met shore. This area produced fewer, but bigger, fish, many surpassing two pounds. Real slabs!

Dams block river bass' upstream runs. Whites stack up in slack water and eddies off to the side of the tailwaters' main flow, both for the spawning opportunities and for the baitfish that congregate there. Don't fish too deep. Find sandbars or other ledges in three to six feet of water.

Wingdams near tailwaters also draw springtime white bass. The best spot is the calm pocket near shore and just upstream

WISCONSIN WHITE BASS WATERS

- Mississippi River (especially Lake Pepin)
- St. Croix River
- Wisconsin River (including Lake Wisconsin, and the Petenwell and Castle Rock flowages)
- Madison Chain of Lakes
- Yahara River
- Lake Koshkonong
- Rock River
- Wolf River
- Fox River
- Lakes Winnebago, Butte des Morts and Poygan
- Lower Green Bay

of a wingdam. Fish like to hold here, where the current is light and baitfish abundant. In fact, most any combination of light or no current, and warm water, can attract white bass now.

In lakes and reservoirs, look for springtime white bass on gravelly shoals, near sandy shores, or anywhere panfish would spawn. If a stream feeds the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 27

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DAVE DUWE

Jig Fishing on the River

Taking advantage of the first open water of the year

After a long winter, it's time to hit the open water. The first opportunity for open water is the spring walleye run on the rivers of Wisconsin that do not have a closed season. During March and April, the walleyes concentrate in the river systems.

The best way to catch the pre-spawn and spawning walleyes is the tried and true jig and minnow or jig with a soft plastic ringworm or grub. Jigs are one of the most versatile lures in an anglers' arsenal. There is not a right or wrong way to fish a jig. There are a myriad of tempos that one can initiate a strike. I prefer using Arkie Red Sickle jigs in pink and chartreuse or Bait Rigs' Odd Ball jigs. The weight of the jig head is dependent on the river current. I prefer to keep constant bottom contact with the jig and to keep the lines as perpendicular as possible.

When the fish are in a non-aggressive mood, I will always use a stinger hook. A stringer hook is a small treble hook attached to the jig with monofilament. This will increase the ability to catch the light biters. I prefer to not hook the minnow with the stringer hook so that it swings freely. This also helps to keep the bait swimming in a natural manner. To prevent line twists, I like to attach a small snap swivel to the main line. This also makes changing jigs easier.

I use braided line in bodies of water that have fewer snags. In rivers with a lot of clutter, I use the monofilament. To present the jigs, I prefer a controlled drift using a bow-mount



Author Captain Dave Duwe with a Rock River walleye.

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DAN MOERICKE

An 'Up Nort' Report

Ice fishing - now and then

While back I was asked by a friend in my former Kiwanis Club if I would be willing to do a presentation to the group on the subject of ice fishing. Before I'd thought about it too hard and, because he's a good friend, I agreed. Then it occurred to me that I'd actually have to figure out what to say.

Now, I'm certainly not an expert on ice fishing, but I have been doing it for over half a century. That fact got me to thinking about how much the sport has changed over the years. In other words, ice fishing now versus ice fishing then.

It seems pretty evident that the first step in ice fishing is to put a hole in the ice. As a kid, that meant grabbing a heavy ice chisel,

or spud, and pounding away until you hit water. If you were only dealing with 4 or 5 inches of ice, no big deal. But, when the ice got to be two feet thick, punching a hole was a real workout. You didn't punch many.

Gas powered augers changed all that, so that drilling a dozen holes was no longer a physical endurance test. In the past decade, electric augers have made the job even easier. No mixing gasoline or fighting with finicky engines in subzero temps. Just pull the trigger and drill a hole. Oh, and they're a heck of a lot lighter. Mine barely weighs nine pounds. Drilling several dozen holes in an outing has become the norm.

Undoubtedly, the biggest change in ice fishing since I was a kid is the role of electronics. Having detailed topographic maps in an app on your phone makes locating cribs, drop-offs, and underwater points a snap. Much different than the old days of eyeballing some feature on the shoreline and hoping you were in the right vicinity. Spending 10 minutes chiseling a hole through 18 inches of ice only to find out you were on top of a sand bar in a foot of water was a disappointment to say the least. Fill in your favorite discouraging word.

There also was no such thing as a 'fish locator' when I was a kid. You put a weight on your hook, dropped it down, set your bobber so the bait would be a foot or so off the bottom and hoped. The closest thing we had to a locator was to lay prone on the ice, put your hands beside your head to block the light, and stare down the hole. These days, I don't think I'd even venture onto the ice without my locator. Knowing whether or not there are fish in the area



Moericke ice fishing now – An electric auger, a locator and an ultralight rod made this fish fry possible.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 27

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TOM CARPENTER

Cubs Corner

Bullheading: springtime adventure

As I pulled my single-speed Schwinn into the driveway that warm early April afternoon so long ago, there it was: the family car – a tank of a late-60's vintage Impala – with fishing rods leaning up against it.

"Where are we going fishing?" I wondered aloud.

"Bullheading," was Dad's reply. "Let's get loaded. Grab that box of nightcrawlers you picked the other night. Mom's got dinner ready. Then we'll head out."

For a boy who could never get enough fishing, it was a dream come true, out of the blue, and the world was mine.

It was a rite of spring.

There was the evening that three deer came to the water's edge for a drink soon after we had cast out our lines and sat back to wait for darkness. It was my first encounter with wild deer, and whitetails' sleek beauty mesmerizes me to this day.

There was the night we got caught in a thunderstorm. We raced for a mile back toward the car with lightning cracking and thunder bellowing overhead. My job was to carry the bucket filled with 27 yellow-bellied bullheads

we had already caught and not one of our ugly prizes had sloshed out.

There was always the hiss of a gas lantern, lit during that in-between time after dusk had faded but before full darkness really hit. You might catch a bullhead or two before lantern-lighting, but the event usually signified the beginning of any real action.

Usually we stayed out until 10:30 PM or so – an adventure in itself – followed by a fish cleaning session at home. You were lucky to be in bed by midnight. Much of our bullheading happened on Fridays or Saturdays, but Dad was not averse to going on a school night if conditions were right. He had his priorities straight, at least as far as I was concerned.

And to be honest, there really is nothing like a bullhead fillet, carefully carved from a cold-water fish that has been fasting much of the winter. Rolled in cornmeal or cracker crumbs and deep fried in peanut oil, the lean, sweet and firm meat is superb.

One of the neatest things about creating a bullhead adventure is this: It's so easy. It can happen near home



(most everybody has some good bullhead water within an easy drive). The tackle and rigs are simple and affordable (you probably have everything you need already). And kids love bullheading (because fishing at night is such a new and exciting adventure).

Any medium-power spincasting or spinning outfit will do the job. Ten-pound-test monofilament line is just right – it won't reduce bites from aggressive bullheads, and it will help you pull hooks out of snags and the mouths of fish. Slide a 3/8 to 1/2 ounce egg sinker on your line, add a barrel swivel, then add a 30-inch dropper ending with a long-shanked hook in size 2 to 1/0. Bullheads like to swallow hooks, sanding the long shank helps you crank it out.

Consider a lantern essential. Garden worms and

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

JERRY KIESOW

Fly-Fishing in Wisconsin

The soft hackle fly – easily tied and effective

With this issue we embark on a series of articles regarding different types of flies, their history, tying, and fishing them.

Picture this: A man in his mid-forties enters and intently observes a river. He is looking to see if any fish are rising, chasing or tailing, thereby telling him if fish are feeding. After careful consideration, he opens his fly box and chooses a number 10 partridge and orange soft hackle and secures it to a 4X tippet. He double checks the knot, tosses the fly into the river and casts it short, fishing the water in front of him first.

With each cast, he fishes the fly farther and farther away. Casting the line slightly downstream and across, letting it drift until it almost drags. He mends the line so the fly can continue to drift drag free. At the end of the drift, he lets the fly swing and hang for a few moments, its hackles, or "feet," dangling, moving, enticing. Sometimes he twitches the fly. Occasionally, he retrieves it a short distance.

After working through all the productive water, he takes a few steps downstream and repeats his effort, fishing the soft hackle slowly and methodically. Occasionally, he releases a smallmouth bass – the fish of choice that day.

The soft hackle fly came to America via northern England during the 1880s or earlier. It has been said that the soft hackle fly simulates an emerging aquatic insect wiggling its "legs (the hackle)," as it climbs onto the film. It looks like food to a fish. It is easy to tie and can be done in a variety of colors and sizes, such as


orange, red, or olive, among others. Tie them on numbers eight through 16, or smaller if you can.

The secret to the effectiveness of this fly is the profile and movement of the "legs," which are made with the soft hackle. Fish usually find them hard to refuse.

To tie: Form the body tapered, heavy in front, thin in back, with tying thread, then wrap (palmer) one or two wraps of Hungarian partridge, snipe, woodcock, grouse, or even hen chicken hackle around the shaft of the hook directly in front of the body. Secure the hackle, trim the excess, form a neat head, whip-finish, trim the thread and varnish the head. That's it. It almost takes longer to tell you how to tie it, than to do it.

If you want to be fancy, use floss or dubbing for the body, varnish the thread body or add a thorax of peacock herl. Finish with a soft hackle of your choice that is a tad longer than the hook.

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/or great gifts. They are available for purchase at Orange Hat Publishing, Amazon, and his website: www.jerrykiesowoc.com. Be sure to check his site out often to follow his updates and endeavors – which he does not always tell you about.



TYLER FLORCZAK

A Tale of a Tail

Trophy buck's fall will assist angler's pursuit of musky

This past fall, I was fortunate enough to lay the hammer on a mature buck during opening weekend of gun season. The 152-inch, eight-point buck was a deer that frequented a parcel of land my father-in-law and I bow hunt hard each year, but the trophy buck refused to show in shooting light the past two seasons. He was the target buck that I literally spent hundreds of hours bowhunting and scouring over the 100-plus trail camera pictures and videos we'd captured—along with one side of his rack he shed in February 2019.

As luck would have it, the buck met his demise when he gave me an 85-yard chip-shot during Wisconsin's nine-day gun season. I was elated to harvest the beautiful animal. Finally the quest to harvest "The Big 8" was over.

Over the course of the next few days, I couldn't help but feel some guilt and anguish. That buck had motivated me to hunt harder than I've ever hunted. He challenged me to try new tactics, shuffle stand setups and strategize every detail of each hunt in an attempt to see the monster whitetail on the hoof. To be honest, I was disappointed that the cat-and-mouse game was over. But I had already pulled the trigger, processed the deer meat and brought the buck to the taxidermist for a shoulder mount.

Then, the light bulb moment struck.

I quickly phoned Clint Worden, owner of Worden's Guide Service in Chetek, and presented my idea of having him make me customized musky bucktails out of my deer tail. This guy is a lure-making, fly-tying, muskie-fighting, fishing fanatic who takes pride in doing things a little less conventional. That's exactly why I knew Worden was the right guy to create my favorite-colored muskie bucktails.

For years, Worden created high-quality, custom-designed bucktails. His fly-tying and musky lure hobby eventually turned into a side job, as he sold baits and lures to local sport shops and anglers in Northwest Wisconsin. Although Worden officially retired his CNP (Clint 'n' Peggy—Clint's wife) Bucktails business, he still enjoys helping fellow outdoorsmen in need.

Worden broke down the process of how he transforms a deer tail into a beautiful, functional Musky lure that could turn a 152-inch buck, into a potential "200-incher" (if it were to yield a 48-inch or larger musky).

1. Remove the tailbone from the deer tail and split the tail. Flesh out any fat membranes on the interior of the tail. Wash the tail thoroughly with water and bleach. Coat the tail with canning salt or kosher salt and let it dry down, which can take a month or so. Then, wash the tail in hot water, a little bleach and some Dawn dish soap. This eliminates any lingering blood, dirt, burs, etc. Pat dry.
2. Now that there is a bright white bucktail, lure makers have the option to use the white hair or dye the tail to a specific color.
3. Deer tails generally have finer hair near the tip of the tail and more hollow hair at the base. Pinch off tail hair in small bunches—about the diameter of a No. 2 pencil—and cut at the skin before wrapping the hair onto the housing, then repeat. This process will make the



Eight perfectly-tied homemade bucktails, tied by Clint Worden, of Chetek, is the finished product, just two months after the deer tail was dropped off to Worden.

actual tail of the bucktail and will look similar to a tube fly.

4. Once the tail is tied to the housing, the stainless-steel shaft is cut accordingly to the preferred lure size, while the desired beads, blades and treble hook(s) are added.

The next time you harvest a whitetail, consider utilizing the deer's tail to make customized bucktails that can produce lasting memories of that trophy buck with monster muskies on the open water. 🐟

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

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BILL THORNLEY

Wisconsin Winter

Nature endures

This hasn't been a terribly cold winter, but the snow is getting deep in the north country. I wondered just how well the deer are doing and how much feed the turkeys are finding as they try to claw through the hard crust formed by melting and freezing snow from storms past.

The Winter Severity Index (WSI) is a tool used by the Department of Natural Resources to measure winter impact on wildlife. It uses the number of days with a minimum temperature of 0-degrees as a measure of winter air-chill, and the number of days with 18 inches of snow on the ground to estimate the snow hazard. Days when both conditions occurred are scored as 2. These are added together from December 1 through April 30 to obtain the WSI.

Winters are considered "mild" if the calculated WSI is less than 50; "moderate" if it is between 50 and 80; "severe" if it is between 80 and 100; and "very severe" if the WSI exceeds 100. Looking at the landscape, I wondered what the Northern WSI was at this point and how the wildlife was doing. I contacted DNR biologist Nancy Christel from the Spooner DNR Service Station to inquire.

"The WSI is not too bad," she reported. "We haven't really reached the 16-inch snow depth in the Spooner and Webster areas, though we were really close in December." A warm-up, she noted, melted a lot of the snow on the ground and compacted it.

The Minong area, in Northern Washburn County, however, has received more snow and is experiencing a slightly harsher winter at this point. But the deer, said Christel, are doing well, as are the turkeys she has seen. "There have been no reports of turkeys dead," she said. "I have seen several flocks, and they look like they are getting around well. They didn't look to be having trouble." She added that "I've seen a lot of flocks. When you lose some birds seems to be closer to spring when they just can't make it to the milder weather; they've just had enough."

This was a relief. I recalled the record snows in the winter of 2013, when people shoveling snow simply ran out of places



Deer gather under a tree, resting and conserving energy. Winter is never easy in the North. PHOTOS BY BILL THORNLEY



So far, wild turkeys are holding their own this winter, according to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources in Spooner.



The tiny chickadee survives sometimes brutal winter nights. In nature, each day is a test.

to put it and turkeys were literally falling out of trees, dead from starvation. They couldn't reach food because of the snow depth.

Northern deer, Christel said, also seem to be able to move around well this year. They are walking where they want, and do not seem to be yarding up in one spot as they tend to do in harder conditions. It was good news, but of course we will have to see what the rest of the winter brings. Winter has lasted longer the past couple seasons.

Survival is an every day struggle in the wild. But the songbirds, deer, turkeys, squirrels, waterfowl, rabbits and other wild creatures endure. Somehow, they find a way. 🐾

TOM CARPENTER

Badger Birds

Eastern Bluebird

Sky-blue above and rusty-red below, with a creamy white belly, the sight of an Eastern Bluebird makes your heart fly, especially on a late-winter or early spring day in a landscape starved for color.

Because he is a thrush like robins and catbirds, the bluebird sings beautifully - a lovely and happy lilt that fills your heart with joy. Bluebirds hunt flying insects and grubs with a vengeance, making these birds a gardener's best friend and a farmer's best ally. Bluebirds will eat dried berries and seeds when bugs are not yet available in early spring, or in autumn.

Across Wisconsin, bluebirds inhabit mostly-open areas such as meadows, pastures, golf courses, parks and yards, after returning from their wintering grounds in the central states and South.

Listen for the beautiful song: a lovely, harmonious and musical melody you might describe as *churlee-churlee-churlee*.

Look for bluebirds perched on fences, trees or old snags, where they wait to flutter out and snatch flying insect prey. Bluebirds also hover low over the ground to hunt for caterpillars and grubs.

Feed bluebirds grubs or mealworms in spring and early summer, from a rimmed tray or platform feeder.

Attract cavity-nesting bluebirds with a good quality wood nest box with an opening size of 1-1/2 inches, placed 4 to 6 feet above the ground. Face the opening north or east to avoid the hot sun. Evict unwanted sparrows and other nesters; they can find another spot.

Leave old trees and dead limbs up as long as safe, because they provide natural nesting cavities for bluebirds.

Did you know that the far west has the western bluebird (deep-colored chestnut breast) and the Rocky Mountains feature the mountain bluebird (pale blue chest)? All three species behave similarly. Western bluebirds have never been seen in Wisconsin, but there are records of mountain bluebirds breeding here.

A great place to learn more about bluebirds and how to attract them is the North American Bluebird Society website at nabluebirdsociety.org. 🐦



11 bluebirds huddled on a branch during Wisconsin's winter? See Ellis Blogs at www.onwisconsinoutdoors.com.

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

CARPENTER, FROM PAGE 10

nightcrawlers make the best bait, but cut bait works too. This is a bottom-fishing proposition, so toss out your rig, prop the rod in a forked stick or holder, and wait for the tip to start bobbing at the tug of a hungry bullhead.

Good springtime bullhead locations include protected bays and coves, boat channels, canals, slow-moving sloughs off rivers, backwater lakes, most any protected water that warms faster than the main lake or river.

Kids love bullheading. You can see it in their sparkling eyes in the lantern light as the frogs and creepers serenade you, another rod tip starts bouncing and the warm air hugs you in its springtime embrace. 🐸

LEE GATZKE

Winter Trail Camera Monitoring

Post-season information vital to future deer season success

Information gathered from trail cameras after hunting season provides valuable insights and helps develop strategies for upcoming deer seasons

The recent gun and bow deer hunting seasons are now only a memory. This is a good time to make any repairs or tweaks to your gear before it is packed away. You're more likely to remember what needs attention now rather than when it comes out of storage next fall.

The last item I pack away are my trail cameras. There are good reasons for leaving cameras in place, such as monitoring deer movements until the snow melts in early spring. Personally, I find it hard to abandon interacting with deer come the end of late bow season. Having cameras remotely monitoring the local herd keeps me in touch with

them and helps me ease into the off-season. I'm also curious as to how the deer go about life at this time of year.

Post-season trail camera-monitoring provides valuable insights that can pay off next season, including:

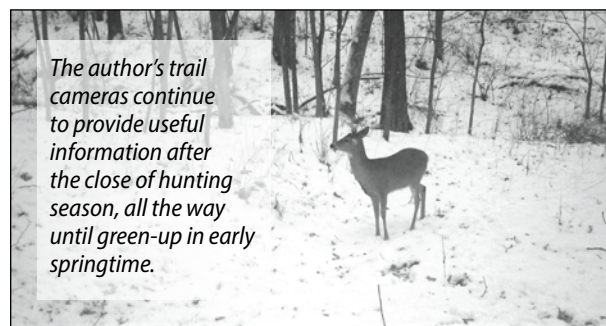
- How winter weather affects deer movement
- Which deer survived the hunting seasons and harsh winter
- Where deer over-winter in their doe/fawn family groups and buck bachelor groups
- When the bucks shed their antlers
- Population swings
- Buck-to-doe ratios
- Predators

Monitoring winter weather and deer movement on camera shows deer activity patterns related to changes in temperature, wind, approaching weather fronts, or daylight conditions. This information is especially useful for future late-season hunting. Pictures of deer taken in April are a good indicator of which deer, and how many of them, survived the hard times and will be available to hunt the coming fall.

Sometime after the nine-day gun season, bucks begin to re-establish their bachelor groups and trail cameras reflect this. Does also gather together in larger groups containing multiple families and they, along with the buck bachelor groups, congregate closer to winter food sources as winter gets tougher. Other winter trail camera observations have shown that areas that held deer during the hunting seasons become almost void of them post-gun season. The opposite holds true when areas that held few deer during the hunting season are now transformed into hosting a consistent number of them throughout the winter. Thermal cover and browse availability seem to be the draw.

Wintertime trail cameras monitor the wide window of time when bucks shed their antlers from mid-December to early April. I've noticed population swings over years of doing this. During the past season, my area was hit with Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease which killed many deer locally. Trail camera pictures confirmed far fewer deer this year than in recent years. Buck-to-doe ratios are very evident if you closely observe the pictures showing skull pedestals on the bucks that have shed. Predator numbers vary also, showing the variety and prevalence in any given year.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 30



The author's trail cameras continue to provide useful information after the close of hunting season, all the way until green-up in early springtime.

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BOB SPIERINGS

Bear Baiting 101

In a blink of an eye 2020 is here and baiting season is right around the corner, as well as a few bear management changes coming in 2021! With the future being unpredictable, make sure you go out with a bang this bear season by following these helpful tips.

Location, location, location! We preach it every year, but there is a reason; it can truly make or break your season. Picking a site that is brushy and secluded with minimal human traffic can make a wary bear feel more comfortable, resulting in them coming in even during daylight hours.

As opening day of the season arrives, you can go from multiple bears - if you're lucky - arriving daily to just a couple of cubs. At this time bears start to prepare for hibernation craving their natural foods that are high in fat and proteins, mainly acorns and field corn. Plan ahead for this by placing a bait site adjacent to hardwood ridges, corn fields and other habitats that are bountiful in natural foods which will keep bears close to your bait site even when the natural forage ripens. In addition to purchasing quality bait high in fat and protein, don't forget bear favorites trail mix and peanut butter.

Location; check! Quality bait; check! Most importantly, and what many hunters fail at or eventually get lazy about continuing to use, are scent lures. Scent lures are absolutely essential when starting a new bait site. Some locations may have bears on that site the very first night even without using any lures, but most new bait sites need a lure of some sort to let the bears know you're in the area. Depending on the wind and travel corridors, without a scent lure, many bears might not even know you have a bait site just a short distance away.

How do you overcome this? Apply scent, every single time all the way until the last day you hunt and apply not just on the bait site. Apply scent in a 30-foot radius around

the site as well as applying it to the bottoms of your boots or a rag on a string dragging it as you walk around and leave the site. This will also "notify" the bears that you just baited, training them to come in on a regular basis.

Be sure to not just use any scent lure. Note the ingredients of the scent you're using; oil based products will hold up to heavy rains and evaporation much longer than a water based scent lure. If you pack in long distances, look for scent lures that easily slip into a pocket and are light in weight. Here at Bob's Bear Bait we expanded our scent line to check off all these attributes and ensure you're getting top of the line scents that not only smell great, but are also functional and practical.

For more great tips stop in this season and chat with us. We have staff members on hand with over 20-plus years of combined experience bear hunting and 12 years in the bear bait business! We carry the largest variety of bear bait in Wisconsin, with multiple locations in Wisconsin and Michigan. We pride ourselves in being your one-stop shop for all your baiting needs including scents, bulk bait, fruit toppings, dry bait, and the list goes on. Remember, once the season hits, bait sells out fast!

Follow us on Facebook and Instagram at Bob's Bear Bait to stay up-to-date with our latest news and sales and check out our bait selection and locations at bobsbearbait.com!

As always happy baiting and congrats to all the hunters that draw this year! 🐾

Bob's Bear Bait, with Wisconsin locations in Appleton, Phelps and in Upper Michigan, has been supplying bear bait for over 10 years. You can shop and pick up bait at any of the locations. Bear bait scent can be ordered online and shipped for free. Contact us at sales@bobsbearbait.com or call 920-419-1238.



Explore Wisconsin



SPOTLIGHT | MANITOWISH WATERS

Historic Manitowish Waters- Well Worth Your Visit

The history of the Northwoods of Wisconsin has been written by the lakes, rivers, forests and changing seasons. Bands of Native Americans were the earliest inhabitants of Manitowish Waters, drawn by its abundant wild rice, fish, game and maple syrup that they harvested to sustain generation after generation.

The earliest European voyageurs and fur trappers were next on the horizon. In the 19th century, these explorers traded with the natives and mapped the territory for the next influx of immigrants. The Northwoods' vast timber resources that stretched over the land seemed endless. Timber barons sent their work crews steadily into the Northwoods, felling giant red and white pines, floating them down raging rivers in the spring, and later, bringing them out of the woods by oxen pulling huge loads of cut trees that towered above them.

Entrepreneurs saw promise in other ways: some through homesteading, others sensing the desire of city folk to relax, fish and hunt in the pristine and beautiful Northwoods. Sportsmen and wealthy families traveled by rail from Chicago and Milwaukee to rail hubs, then were taken by horse and wagon, some even by boat, to reach their vacation destination. The first lodge was built on Island Lake in the 1880s.



Historic Manitowish Waters is one of many reasons to visit us this year. We look forward to helping you and your family create your own memories.



CONTINUED ON PAGE 30

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Darrell Bartel, Founder, **Flatlineyourbird Series Decoys**.



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JOHN CLER

A Future in Decline *Step up for hunting and fishing*

The sale of hunting, fishing and trapping licenses is declining in Wisconsin, as they are across the country. There are many reasons cited for this decline, most of which we have no control over. The loss of license revenues will result in reduced funding for conservation efforts that help insure clean water, good wildlife habitat and access to places to pursue outdoor activities. Sportsmen and women have always volunteered to lead the way in conservation efforts with stamp fees, excise taxes and increased license fees.

If each of us would recruit a new person to outdoor pursuits, the problem would be solved. This is why the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR), with help from other groups, has implemented the "R3" program. The aim is to Recruit, Retain and Reactivate people in outdoor pursuits.

Taking your own children, nieces and nephews into the outdoors is a great start. Inviting some of their friends that

don't belong to a family with an outdoor mentor to join in the fun is a great way to expand your influence and help insure that all will remain engaged in the outdoors. My own father invited friends of his children to join our group. We are now in our mid-sixties and still hunting together.

There are special youth hunts and mentored hunting opportunities that have been made available by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. Check the appropriate set of regulations or the DNR website for additional information.

The fastest growing group of outdoor enthusiasts is women. Forty years ago, females were a rare sight in the outdoors. This is no longer the case. Should you choose to become a mentor, don't rule out half of the population.

A new twist to mentoring is the "Hunting and Fishing for Food" movement. There are many adults, with little or no outdoor experience, that value the idea of natural, locally-based foods that we all take for granted. The low-fat protein



Jacob Zeuske, second from left, mentored this group of novices on a pheasant hunt for adults. PHOTO BY EMILY LEHL

found in wild fish and game is the initial draw for these folks. Research indicates that those who begin hunting and fishing as adults are more likely to continue than are youngsters.

There are many sportsman's clubs and local chapters of national organizations like the National Wild Turkey Federation, Ducks Unlimited and Pheasants Forever that sponsor "Learn-To-Hunt" activities. These usually begin with a short educational session, include some shooting practice, and are followed by a hunting experience with a mentor. The limiting factor on the number of participants

CONTINUED ON PAGE 18



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-Gregg Borneman





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TOM MUELLER

Here Means Here

More off-season obedience training

Like “sit,” the “here” command is one of the first commands that any young retriever learns. “Here,” like “sit,” is one of the easiest commands to teach. Like the “sit” command, “here” is frequently disobeyed. The main reason for this is that like the “sit” command, it is not trained on long enough to be thoroughly conditioned in. Daily obedience training can be boring for both the dog and the trainer, so the trainer wants to get through it quickly. This problem most often crops up with the novice trainer working with their first or even second retriever. They are so eager to see their dog progress that they don’t realize the importance of thoroughly conditioning the obedience commands. Even though obedience issues often show up before their first hunting season, they are usually

ignored. It’s usually then realized during the hunting season that there’s more obedience work to be done.

Most often when someone is training a young retriever and the dog responds to the “here” command most of the time, they feel the dog is pretty much trained to come when called or what is known in the retriever world as “recall.” Therein lies the problem. Most of the time you can take any young retriever, or even an older one, that has not been thoroughly over-trained to return to its owner when called; put it in an environment where it has never been, and it will start sniffing and looking and checking things out.

Ultimately it will start to ignore its owner. The owner calls their dog, but the dog continues to sniff and smell and walk away

giving its full attention to whatever aromas it finds in the grass. The owner calls the dog, but the dog ignores the command while continuing to follow its nose. The owner commands “here” again and again as the dog continues to ignore. Eventually either the dog responds and comes to its owner or the owner gives a correction either with a tug on a lead or a nick if the dog has been conditioned to the e-collar. While all that is happening, the dog learns that it doesn’t have to come on the first command; that it doesn’t have to respond until it’s heard the “here” command several times; or it only has to come when it’s made to by a correction.

Whether you’re working with a pup or a dog that’s already been obedience trained but has issues, the best place to start is at the beginning. Again, like teaching “sit,” using food rewards gets the process going. Working with the dog just a few feet from you and on lead gets the dog responding to the “here” command and teaches it that when it comes to you it gets rewarded. Increasing the distance over time conditions the dog to come whenever called from wherever it’s at.

After the dog or puppy is solid on returning to you when called at longer distances, shorten the distance and switch to using a dummy. Tease the dog with a few very short retrieves and then have it sit while showing it the dummy. Walk a short distance away and call it to you. When it returns, have it sit. Wait a few seconds, then give it a very short retrieve. After the dog picks up the

dummy, pet it and praise it calling it to you with a lot of excitement while letting it hold onto the dummy for a bit before taking it. Eventually increase the distance.

Whether you’re working with a pup, a young dog, or one with some experience, this is a very fun way to teach recall. Retrievers love playing this game and it keeps your dog focused on you. 🐾

Tom has been avidly training retrievers since the early 1980s. His passion has evolved into helping others train their retrievers through the Fox Valley Retriever Club so they can achieve the satisfaction that he has had. For questions or information regarding retriever training or the Fox Valley Retriever Club contact Tom at winddancer.rtrvrs@hotmail.com

CLER, FROM PAGE 17

is usually the number of qualified mentors available.

The National Wild Turkey Federation and Pheasants Forever have both recognized the need to support the “R3” efforts of the Wisconsin DNR by hiring people that are assigned to assist. John Motoviloff (jmotoviloff@nwtf.org) and Marty Moses (mmoses@pheasantsforever.org) work for the DNR and their respective organizations in planning mentor training and mentored activities. Mentoring can be as easy as passing a background check and showing up to guide someone new to the outdoors.

It is important that each of us do what we can to bring more people into the outdoor pursuits. Mentoring is fun and rewarding. If this fits your experience and personality, mentor someone individually or contact a group that offers mentored experiences. If mentoring is not for you, volunteer to cook for a mentored activity, join a sponsoring organization, attend a fund raising banquet or donate money or merchandise to mentored activities. The future is in our hands! 🐾

John Cler is a retired high school science teacher and principal. He pursues his love for hunting, fishing and trapping from his home-base in Richland Center.



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In 2020,

good friends and experienced Kayakers Marcus Mallette and Jake Quigley will be showcasing some of the best kayaking routes and waterways across the state for On Wisconsin Outdoors. The spotlight rests first on one of their personal favorites, the Delafield/Summit segment of the Bark River.

"This part of southeast Wisconsin has a pretty fitting nickname; 'Lake Country', said Mallette. "With over a dozen lakes in just a 15 minute driving radius, it's hard not to run into some water."

Delafield native Mallette and Hartland native Quigley know these waters well, including the Bark. We'll hand it over to them now and for the rest of the season. We hope you follow their journeys, on these pages or our website, and literally on some of Wisconsin's most appealing waterways.

MARCUS MALLETTE & JACOB QUIGLEY

Kayaking Wisconsin

Meet the Lake Country's Bark River

To enter the Bark, we particularly like to start from the Nemahbin Lakes, which you can access from multiple launches. There you can tool around the lakes, grab a bite to eat at Panga Bar (great burgers), watch the 4th of July fireworks, or even explore a few different islands.

If jumping right into the river route, this two- to three-hour, one way trip begins out of Lower Nemahbin's west bank. Here you'll enter the mouth of the Bark River funneling into tall, picturesque river reeds. Crystal clear, gradually flowing water surrounds you as schools of bluegill and small mouth bass zip by. Expect encounters with other wildlife from muskrats to turtles, large birds and deer.

The Bark River travels through eight different lakes/ponds from start to finish. Continuing beyond the Hwy P (Sawyer Road) Dam, you'll feel as if you've left the area all together, entering an ever-so-inviting and secluded oasis. The reeds now tower over you, the sounds of nature begin to consume you, and relaxation sets in.

The Bark averages thigh-deep water and offers an easy going pace, allowing you to kick back with only the occasional steer of the paddle to keep you on course. (Navigation tip: three low bridges make for a tricky maneuver. If the water is low enough, you'll slide right under, but sometimes portaging is the only way to go. Use caution.) Winding your way downstream, you'll eventually come to a fork in the river.

Here you face the decision of entering the north or south end of Crooked Lake, incredibly beautiful, private water full of great swimming spots and topnotch fishing. We recommend the north. Northern Pike dominate this hidden lake. My friend once hooked a pike here so large that it literally took him for a ride in his kayak!

Exiting the south end of Crooked and continuing down the last section of this route on the Bark promises more endless beauty. Sandy bottoms great for swimming and cooling off on a hot summer day draw other kayakers who often barge together on a sandbar soaking up sun, having a few cold ones, and playing Frisbee or whatever they choose.



Kayaking the Bark River in Waukesha County promises seclusion, beauty, and paddling fun.

Despite the urge to continue further, we often end this trip at Genesee Lake Road and its convenient place to exit the river. If you're looking to stretch the trip two-plus hours, continue down to Hwy 67/18 in Dousman. The Bark River actually spans 67.5 miles, starting in Bark Lake in Richfield before eventually spilling into the Rock River at Fort Atkinson. You're sure to find a stretch you'll enjoy!

Did You Know? The Bark River, also rarely known as "Peelbark River", is part of the mighty Mississippi watershed. Although it starts as a

CONTINUED ON PAGE 31

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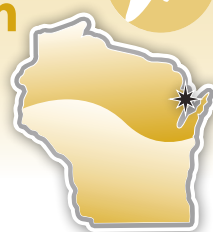
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Explore Wisconsin



**SPOTLIGHT
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Every spring, the major Wisconsin tributaries to Green Bay host a walleye run, with two of those tributaries being located in Marinette County. Thousands of walleye swim from Green Bay up the Menominee and Peshtigo Rivers. The appearance of these fish signal the start of the Spring Walleye run when the walleye population is at its highest level of the year, offering an incredible fishing opportunity for anglers.

Large numbers of fishing enthusiasts wade into rapids along the river banks and below the dams or try their luck out on the water from a boat. The lower Menominee River has access to shoreline fishing and boat landings. The Lower Peshtigo River has a different fishing experience with scenic shorelines to fish from and the ability to float down the river to various boat landings as you fish for that trophy walleye. However you decide to fish, the lower Peshtigo and Menominee Rivers are prime destinations for anglers in late March, April and early May. You will be amazed by the variety of scenic views, wildlife or an up close and personal view of an LCS Navy ship.

To help protect walleyes during spring spawning, the DNR has instituted special regulations on the Menominee and Peshtigo River, as well as other tributaries to Green Bay and Lake Michigan. In March and April, the daily bag limit is one walleye with a minimum length of 15 inches. In addition, most anglers practice catch-and-release on any female walleye carrying eggs. In early May, once the inland fishing season opens, the daily limit changes to five walleyes over 15 inches. Even though you can only keep one walleye in March and April, your chance of catching a 30+ inch trophy walleye is excellent!

Anglers from across the region visit the area during the spring walleye run and stay at one of the many motels or hotels in the area. When in town, enjoy one of Mickey Lu's famous grilled burgers or dine at any one of Marinette or Peshtigo's top of the line restaurants.

From the shores of Green Bay to the inland waters, Marinette County has something for every outdoor enthusiast. 

MIKE YURK

Drivel Worth the Read

Gordon MacQuarrie Classics

Gordon MacQuarrie's writing in the *Milwaukee Journal* continues his legacy in two recent collections of his columns.

THE BEST DRIVEL FROM GORDON MACQUARRIE

Gordon MacQuarrie was the dean of Wisconsin outdoor writers and one of the first full-time professional outdoor writers for any major newspaper in the country. He was the outdoor writer for the *Milwaukee Journal* from 1936 until his untimely death in 1956 at the age 56.

He was at a meeting when a fellow outdoorsman and fan of his writing passed him a note telling MacQuarrie he had been reading his drivel for years and wondered if he would like to go fishing. They became fast friends after that and Gordon immortalized his friend in many of his stories and other drivel. For MacQuarrie, with his sense of humor, drivel became a term of honor.

Gordon MacQuarrie's legacy has been kept alive for these last 60 years through the publication of books featuring magazine articles written for many of the major outdoor magazines of his day.

Stories written during MacQuarrie's 20 years with the *Journal* have, for the most part, been lost to the world of print obscurity - until now. Dave Evenson of Cumberland, Wisconsin, a retired wildlife manager for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and an avid fan, has collected many of MacQuarrie's *Journal* columns in two books recently published by the Barnes Area Historical Association.

The Barnes Area Historical Association has maintained a special place for all things related to Gordon MacQuarrie. They have a room exhibiting MacQuarrie's duck boat, decoys, fishing equipment, type writer and numerous other memorabilia from his active life. The museum is not far from the Middle Eau Claire Lake which was the location for many of MacQuarrie's outdoor adventures and writings.

RIGHT OFF THE REEL

The first book, *Right Off The Reel*, published in 2018, was the name of MacQuarrie's *Milwaukee Journal* column. The book has 84 stories taken from throughout his *Journal* career.

In 220 pages divided into ten chapters, the stories follow chronologically throughout out his *Journal* career. The stories have intriguing titles such as "The Old Sportsman is Sermon in Himself," "Summer Cottages Have Habit of Growing," "Trolling the Saber Tooth Rabbit" and many more showing his versatility, wit and love of Wisconsin outdoors.

This collection also includes his reporting of the Armistice Day Storm in 1940, still considered one of the most tragic disasters in outdoor history. He set the scene in the lead of one of the stories by writing "The winds of hell were loose on the Mississippi Armistice Day and night."

DOGS, DRINK & OTHER DRIVEL

The second collection was published last year, titled *Dogs, Drink & Other Drivel*. It has 141 stories divided into 12 chapters and designated by subjects, including dogs and drinking, as the title implies. Other chapters such as "Traveling Man" takes readers on many of his outdoor travels. Another covers the outdoor world during World War II, his love of Middle Eau Claire Lake and the need for conservation and scientific management of resources. MacQuarrie was an early proponent in Wisconsin's conservation movement and he righteously battled in support of it in his columns.

Both books can be purchased on Amazon, ordered from any book dealer or better yet from the Barnes Area Historical Museum gift shop. This can be done online by going to the museum website and clicking on the gift shop. *Right Off The Reel* sells for \$18 and *Dogs, Drink & Other Drivel* costs \$20. The gift shop adds an additional \$3 shipping fee. 📦

Don Evenson, who, as mentioned, collected the stories and edited both books, has designated that all profits go to the Barnes Historical Museum and its MacQuarrie exhibit and programs.



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SPOTLIGHT | LACROSSE

Explore Wisconsin 

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The La Crosse Region provides endless fun and recreational opportunities for all who love the outdoors. If you're an outdoor enthusiast, bring your family to the Driftless Outdoors Show! Held at the Onalaska Omni Center May 8 and 9, you can enjoy an arena full of regional vendors showcasing boating, fishing, biking, hiking, recreational activities and more!

Enthusiasts will be able to watch a screening of the award-winning documentary, *Decoding the Driftless*, and attend presentations put on by River Valley Raptors and WisCorps. Don't forget to come out Friday night to **Driftless After Dark!** This event will feature live music by Joe Cody & the Tequila Brothers and prizes to be drawn all night long. Bring your friends, bring your spouse, and bring your appetite for fun.

Back by popular demand, we proudly announce that DockDogs, the World's Premier Canine Aquatic Competition, will be returning! Locals can enter their dog to compete in this event.

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Explore Wisconsin

SPOTLIGHT | ASHLAND

Spring Smelting Run, and Other Buckets of Fun

Days are getting longer now which means more daylight hours to enjoy the great outdoors in Ashland County! This time of year, we have to remind ourselves that no winter lasts forever and no spring skips its turn. If you love winter though, don't fret; Ashland promises that there are still plenty of days with fun events and activities to enjoy crisp cold air and fresh fallen snow in the weeks and even months to come.

Winter outdoor activities in Ashland County continue in March with the Ice-o-Rama Ice Fishing Contest March 7 - 8 on Lake Superior. For fair-weather friends who prefer to be inside, we highly recommend the Northern Great Lake Visitor Center, or the Ashland County drive-around to view the beautiful murals that stunningly depict our history.

The Chequamegon Bay "Smelt Run" usually (but not always) starts around the third week in April soon after ice-out. Smelt are unpredictable little fish planted in the lake many decades ago. They are approximately 4- to 5-inches in length that only answer to Mother Nature's spawning commands. Although not a native fish to Lake Superior, the run has provided an annual tradition of great netting fun and great table fare in this area for many years. The run may not be as plentiful as the bountiful harvests of yesterday, but the netters and the fun bathed in the lantern lights on our shorelines will be. You are so welcome.



With winter waning, Ashland's ice fishing and smelting on Lake Superior, inland lakes and tributaries will help you spring into action.

Smelt season usually lasts 12 to 14 days. There is an old tradition that demands you bite the head off the first smelt brought in. Of course, you don't actually eat the head but non-the-less, you would still be the brave smelter for sticking with tradition. For more information on smelt season in the Ashland Area, including regulations and licensing for participating, call us at the Ashland Area Chamber of Commerce at 715-682-2500. As always, we will have a smelt hot line set up during the month of April to assist with your trip planning.

Whether it's a late winter get-away or a spring fling calling, Copper Falls State Park and Morgan Falls located in Ashland County are also picture-perfect places to visit. Copper Falls and Brownstone Falls highlight two miles of steep-walled gorges at Copper Falls State Park. Morgan Falls is at the south fork of Morgan Creek, a stream of water cascades 70 feet down the face of a rock cliff to a small shaded pool. Expect a breathtaking natural scene!

Ashland the Heart of Chequamegon Bay: Where you'll find yourself next to the water!



For a Waterfalls Brochure, 2020 Ashland County Visitor Guide, Mural Brochure, or Chequamegon Bay Fishing Brochure, contact the Ashland Chamber at info@visitashland.com or check visitashland.com

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SPOTLIGHT | HURLEY

Explore Wisconsin



Springtime in Hurley, Wisconsin

According to the calendar, Spring arrives annually on March 21. In Hurley, however, chances are the ground may still be covered in snow and ice on inland lakes. If you're looking to have a unique springtime outdoor activity experience, look no further.

Depending on the type of fishing you prefer, you may find yourself ice fishing on one of the many inland lakes. Always remember to be safe, ask at one of the local bait shops for the "unofficial" fishing report from locals. If you prefer to stay on land, fishing the Montreal River may be exactly what you are looking for.

Snowmobiling continues in Iron County as long as the trails allow. Trail conditions are updated as needed and can be checked on our website at www.hurleywi.com. Iron County allows for ATV/ UTV trail access as long as the temperatures are BELOW 32 degrees. Again, our website is your best resource for information.

With the temperatures warming up, the spring thaw fills our rivers and the waterfalls are best viewed this time of year. There are 19 waterfalls in and around the Hurley area, most are located in remote, wild areas unspoiled by crowds. Some can be driven to while others require

walking and a little bit of orienteering. All are worth the trip. To request a guide, call our office at 715-561-4334.

After a day of adventure, be sure to stop at any of the local establishments. A variety of cuisine is available from fresh, homemade pastas and pizzas to prime rib or a fresh hand-packed burger. Locally owned bars/restaurants specialize in fantastic food and friendly service.

Plan a future getaway and participate in a variety of events

Memorial Day ATV/ UTV Rally, Thursday, May 21 through Sunday, May 24

Come to Hurley for the LARGEST parade of ATV/ UTVs you have ever seen. Ride the trails. Participate in the Poker Run and other events. Attempt the INFAMOUS Mud Pit! Registration and details at: www.hurleywi.com

Saxon Harbor Spring Classic & Powder Puff Fishing Tournament, Friday, June 5 through Sunday, June 7

Saxon Harbor will reopen this year with brand new facilities to welcome boats in off Lake Superior. The boating club will host the Spring Classic from June 5 - 7. Mark your calendars.


Snake Hunt on the Gile Flowage, Saturday, June 20

This annual Northern Pike fishing tournament brings anglers to the Gile Flowage for the chance at cash prizes. Sponsored by the North Pole Tavern. Watch for details on our website.

Heritage Days, Saturday, July 25 through Sunday, August 9

Iron County spotlights its rich heritage of mining and logging with two weeks of events throughout the county. Kicking off the festivities with the Heritage Days Parade, the festival includes the Iron County Fair, Paavo Nurmi Marathon and many other events.

Festival Italiano, Saturday, September 5

A trip to Hurley for the last hoorah of summer won't disappoint! The day is filled with food vendors lining Silver Street, games, craft vendors, and music throughout the day. An afternoon performance by Marty's Goldenaires gets the crowd ready for the evening street dance featuring IV Play from Mankato, Minnesota. 

Join us soon in Hurley! www.hurleywi.com


CARPENTER, FROM PAGE 8

impoundment, fish near the inlet and even work your way upstream (on foot if necessary) to the first barrier.

That's another plus of springtime white bass fishing: You often don't need a boat to catch a boatload of fish!

A great springtime rig is a simple 1/4- or 3/8-ounce jig (chartreuse, yellow and lime green colors work well) tipped with a large crappie minnow or small fathead. Once I find willing fish, I'll often switch to

a curlytail or minnow-shaped PowerBait two to three inches long. Flashy tailspins and in-line spinners, tiny crankbaits and small Rapalas also work well on white bass in spring.


This spring, take the white bass challenge and go on some wild and fun chases in search of this wonderful, exciting fish. 

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

MOERICKE, FROM PAGE 9

and at what depth makes for a far more efficient experience.

Rods, line, and terminal tackle have also had quite an evolution. As a kid, a jig pole was usually fashioned from a broken rod tip jammed into a wooden dowel. A couple of strategically placed pegs to wrap the line around and you were all set. Compare that to the ultra-sensitive rods we have today complete with spring bobbers and it's a wonder we ever caught anything in the past.

On any given Saturday, there are at least a half dozen fishing shows on television all hawking the latest and greatest ice fishing gear, shacks, and clothing. The sport has gotten a lot more comfortable and a whole lot more technical. And just maybe a lot more fun. Maybe the good old days weren't all that good. Just sayin'. 

Dan Moericke lives, fishes, and hunts in the Northwoods, occasionally actually catching a fish and tagging a buck. He is fortunate to have an understanding wife and a great group of buddies to share his days afield. On most days, he is able to remember where he parked his vehicle.

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SPOTLIGHT | HAYWARD

Explore Wisconsin



Pannies for the Pan, and Pure Family Fun

When you're ready to take fun on to the ice this winter, head out on the Hayward Area Lakes for some great ice fishing for panfish.

The Hayward Area is synonymous with fishing, regardless of the season, and the fish don't stop biting through the hardwater months! With the gamefish season ending March 1, until the first Saturday in May, try targeting our tremendous panfish populations. It doesn't require a lot of gear either. Cut a hole in the ice, drop a line down, and sit back and enjoy the beauty of the Hayward Lakes in Northwest Wisconsin.

The Hayward Lakes Area boasts hundreds of lakes of all sizes promising excellent ice fishing. Our waters provide a diversity of prime habitat and opportunities for fast fishing on numerous species of plentiful panfish including bluegill, crappies and our head-turning jumbo perch.

If you love fishing and the great outdoors, fishing is one of the best ways to spend a day outside every winter. Just ask our residents and the thousands of visitors who mark Sawyer County on the calendar as their must-do trip each winter. Bundle up, fill your thermos with your favorite warm beverage and enjoy the snow, the crisp fresh air, and everything else that defines the solitude and peace of our winter wonderland and another great

day on the ice.

Or make it a fun day on the ice with the whole gang! Gather your friends and make it a social event on the ice. The kids (and dogs) will love the adventure and playing in the snow while you wait to feel the weight of another crappie or perch taking your teardrop jig and waxie. Enjoy friendships and the day cooking up a tasty meal of fresh caught fish. It all adds up to another Hayward Lakes memory-maker for friends and family.

Today's ice fishing gear makes it easy to stay warm on the ice and ensure enjoyable time ice fishing. Hayward has well-stocked fishing shops and bait stores with knowledgeable, friendly staff who will help outfit you with the best gear, and provide helpful ice fishing tips. Stop in! They'll be happy to answer your questions.

Hayward's fishing guides will put you safely on the ice. If you'd rather leave the guesswork to a pro, consider hiring an ice fishing guide to truly make your day on the ice comfortable and successful. Ice fishing guides will provide all the equipment you need, including cozy shelters. The fishing guide will do all the work. You relax and fish. 🐟

The winter season is a wonderful time to be lured to the Hayward Area. How can we help? www.haywardlakes.com.



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DUWE, FROM PAGE 9

trolling motor to eliminate much of the speed of the current. I keep the bow of the boat pointed into the current, on constant power, to maintain a perfect drift. Doing so eliminates the need for heavier jigs. By using the boat to maintain speed, you can keep contact with the bottom much easier.

The jig action I start with is a bounce of 3 - 4 inches off bottom. When jigging, often the bites happen on the fall of the jig. It's very important to watch your line for any slight movement; if the line twitches or pops, this indicates a bite.

The two soft plastic combinations I like are a ringworm or a grub jig combination. The ringworm is best fished in turbulent water near dams or neck down areas of the river. I will make long casts up current and let the jig worm naturally bounce down the river. Keep in mind that you should be retrieving the slack line in as it works its way toward you. Twister tails and grubs give an angler a way to cover more water

quickly and catch roaming and active fish. For grub fishing, I will make long casts and make a steady slow retrieve with several pauses.

When fishing a particular river system, I focus on the main river channels and look for breaks in the current by river bends or deep-water holes. My favorite spots include the Wisconsin River near Stevens Point, the Mississippi river near Alma, and the Rock River near Fort Atkinson.

The walleye spawn is usually so good that the fishing pressure can be tremendous. Try going during the week or when the weather is less than perfect to avoid the crowds. Most rivers have very specific bag limits, so make sure you know the rules before you go. Enjoy one of the best fishing times of the year and head to a river near you. 🐟

Dave Duwe is the owner and operator of Dave Duwe's Guide Service, Walworth County Wisconsin 262-728-8063.

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GATZKE, FROM PAGE 13

A word of caution regarding camera placement: Don't put them in spots where you might interfere with the deer and cause them to be stressed by you startling them while coming and going to check your cameras. Late winter is the time when deer are having a tough enough time surviving without us causing them additional stress.

Monitoring trail cameras through the winter will provide you, as it has me, with useful information for the coming hunting season as well as closure for the last. 


Lee Gatzke is co-owner of NextBuk Outdoors, producers of tactical hunting videos. In between hunting seasons he is usually scouting for his next buck.

MANITOWISH WATERS,
FROM PAGE 14

During Prohibition, the lodges and halls filled with "one-armed bandits" and "rum runner" spirits. The local law rarely enforced the federal laws against alcohol and gambling. Famous and infamous guests were legendary. Among the latter were members of the Chicago mob. For the most part, they behaved themselves while "Up North" and didn't attract much outside attention.

A notable exception occurred in 1934, when the FBI caught wind that the John Dillinger gang was staying at the Little Bohemia Resort. A trap was laid, but Dillinger escaped. The resulting shootout left town constable Carl Christensen riddled with eight bullet wounds. He survived, got \$3,500 from the federal government for his troubles, and started his own resort and bar on Hwy. 51.

Visitors can still see the bullet holes in the walls of Little Bohemia. Christensen's scrapbook and other historic artifacts are housed at the Koller Library and at businesses throughout town. The town's colorful history includes tightrope walker Bob Loveless and a caged bear at the Howling Bear.

Eventual civic development led to a school, cemetery and town hall. The airport came after World War II when public enthusiasm for aviation burgeoned. With the advent of the snowmobile in the '60s, the Northwoods officially became a four-season vacationland. 

We invite you to make Manitowish Waters your vacation destination and to build your own memories.

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frabill.com

ESKIMO WIDE 1 INFERNO
WITH SWIVEL SEAT

The fully-insulated Eskimo Wide1 Inferno is an expandable wide-bottom one-man flip-style shelter. Its patented design gives anglers more fishable space, while maintaining the lightweight portability of a one-man shelter thanks to a telescoping front end. Once the front end is expanded, users can fish multiple lines and still have room for electronics and a heater. A larger sled on the Wide1 Inferno creates more fishable area with 14.8 square feet and 60 inches of height for setting hooks. The new mounted swivel Versa Seat is comfortable for hours on end and allows for easy movement while seated. (\$379.99)

franksgreatoutdoors.com

CLAM DRILL AUGER
CONVERSION KIT

Clam's ice auger conversion kit allows an angler to use a cordless drill as the "power" to drill your holes. Extremely lightweight & portable it has changed ice fishing forever. With an improved design, Clam has added the ability to use your drill without taking the chuck off. Same great results as the original design but more user-friendly. Results will vary depending on drill used. Recommend using high torque 18 volt lithium battery powered drills. Ball bearing absorbs the load from the auger so the drill is only used to spin the auger and not to support the auger torque, greatly extending the life of your drill. Attach your auger bit just like you normally would on a power auger. No hassle, no worry setup, no loose bit falling out of the drill. Just pull the trigger, drill and start fishing! (\$89.99)

joessportingoods.com

FENWICK NIGHTHAWK
ICE COMBO ROD

The Fenwick Nighthawk 26" Ice Combo takes the quality and premiere craftsmanship of the Nighthawk rod and brings them to the ice. Featuring a solid glass construction blank, this durable rod comes with a unique TAC and EVA split-grip handle design that provides anglers with ultimate comfort and lightweight feel. Smoked stainless-steel guide frames with stainless-steel inserts add to this rod's lightweight strength. (\$49.99)

overtons.com

IFISH PRO 2.0 TIP-UP

The iFish Pro Tip-Up allows you to use your favorite rod and reel combo, so you don't have to mess with pulling frozen line by hand or re-spooling. The iFish Pro Tip-Up fits over ice holes up to 10 inches as well as over catch covers, making this tip-up ultra-versatile. Plus, you can adjust the trigger release on this tip-up to light, medium, or heavy setting to avoid dealing with false flags and resets in the icy temps. With the multi-setting capability and the easy-to-switch-out rod holder, this ice fishing tip-up is perfect for targeting any size species. With seven Slip-Stops, you can even reset depths and jig without having to move the tip-up. The iFish Pro Tip-Up accommodates rods up to 42 inches and easily folds up and locks in place for easy storage and transport. (\$44.99)

scheels.com



Scott runs an online sporting goods company from his home in Appleton, thenortherntundra.com, and is an avid traveler, photographer, and outdoorsman.



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STUART WILKE

New Decade Begins with a Bang

Exciting new firearms introduced in 2020

A new decade is here and with it the debut of some very innovative firearms and the return of one particularly iconic revolver. "This is a great year for guns," Mike "Shorty" Govas, owner of Shorty's Shooting Sports in West Allis said. "There are so many neat things out there now or coming this year, it's amazing."

Two of the most amazing share a common feature - they're double barreled. Double barrel shotguns are far from uncommon, and, while not commonplace, two-round, double barrel rifles are not unknown, nor are handguns. But a two-barrel, magazine-fed sporting rifle based on the AR15 or a two-barrel, .22 magnum, eight-round revolver? Now that is really amazing! Not to mention innovative feats of engineering destined to make these firearms future collectibles.

Case in point, the Gilboa Snake rifle. The Snake was designed in Israel and is built in the United States and, for all practical purposes, is two AR15 sporting rifles fused into one. The Snake is an amazing piece of engineering, not simply two rifles bolted together. The rifle's barrels are fit into a common receiver where two bolts, two carriers, two triggers and one charging handle reside. And yes, it fires two rounds at a time.

Speaking of snakes, one of the biggest surprises is the rebirth of the Python, Colt's longtime premier revolver that was discontinued decades ago due to high manufacturing costs. Colt's new Python is made of stainless steel and features a semi-bright finish. The trigger has been redesigned for a more consistent and smoother pull and the sights have been improved. The new Python is almost a dead-ringer for the original in appearance and is a best seller. Supply has yet to catch up with demand.

Another new firearm featuring two barrels and fires two rounds at a time is the Standard Manufacturing S3334 Thunderstruck, eight-round, .22 magnum caliber, double-action revolver. The Thunderstruck is a significant departure from Standard's traditional Model 1911 semiautomatic pistols and Single Action Army revolvers, for which they are primarily known. Featuring a frame made of aircraft-grade aluminum, 1 1/4 - inch barrel, two triggers and weighing only 18 ounces, the Thunderstruck is a revolver unlike any other known. Standard calls it "... the most redundant and reliable personal protection firearm ..." Shorty calls it "a blast to shoot."

New and experienced shooters will welcome the news that two highly popular pistols now have .22 caliber siblings. Glock has introduced the Model 44, a .22 caliber semi-auto pistol that closely resembles in looks, feel and function their compact Model 19, one of Glock's most popular models. Shorty is a long-time proponent of .22 pistols as every new handgun owner's first pistol. "It's the best caliber to learn handgun safety and shooting," he said. "And .22 is a viable defense caliber because of their low recoil and muzzle blast."

One of Shorty's biggest sellers is Ruger's LCP line of .380 caliber handguns. Inexpensive and reliable, the six-shot LCP makes for a great concealed carry weapon in the hands of experienced shooters. In the hands of new shooters, not so much because of its relatively high recoil. The LCP II .22 was specifically designed for new shooters and those working their way up to .380 LCPs. In addition to low recoil, the LCP II .22 features Ruger's "Lite Rack" system, which makes the slide easier to manipulate. The LCP .22 also has a manual safety, tilt barrel and 10 + 1 cartridge capacity.



The Gilboa Snake double-barreled rifle, an engineering marvel.

For more information on these and other firearms, stop in at Shorty's Shooting Sports in West Allis. Please note that due to the high demand of some firearms, Shorty's does not provide "rain checks" or pre-order any guns.

Stuart Wilke is a long-time contributor to On Wisconsin Outdoors. Contact him at submissions@onwisconsinoutdoors.com. He would especially like to hear your ideas for future articles.

MALLETTE & QUIGLEY, FROM PAGE 31

small, waist deep river here, it grows larger on its way to the Rock River, then to the Mississippi, and finally into The Gulf of Mexico.

Kayaking's surge in popularity is incredible! Seeing people out, active, and exploring some of these less-often seen areas of Wisconsin is exciting. Connect with and our new "Wanderlust Wisconsin" pages via Facebook or Instagram. Throughout 2020, we look forward to offering destinations, information, videos, photos, resources and tips to help you take advantage of these great Wisconsin kayaking opportunities. We look forward to answering any question you may have about kayaking, and traveling our great state of Wisconsin.

Get out there and kayak. Be safe, and have fun! 🚣

Marcus Mallette and Jacob Quigley have been paddling Wisconsin's river systems for years and will be bringing their journeys and tips home to the OWO audience.

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Presents Firearms Info from Ron Stresing

RON STRESING

Patterning your Shotgun: *Vital preparation for shooting clay, hunting*

Shotgunners often find themselves looking for the next best thing in ammunition. Often, their time, money and effort might be better spent on pattern testing their shotgun. There is a saying among hound hunters that “the bull stops when the tailgate drops.” The same can be said about the pattern testing board. Shotgun patterns do not lie. They will give you exact and definitive information on how your shotgun performs with different chokes and loads at various ranges.

Before sending one shot down range, remember your basic safety rules. Make sure everyone is wearing eye and ear protection. Be aware if you are using metal poles or frame to hang the target, there is a chance for ricocheting pellets. And no one is allowed down range unless the guns are unloaded and on safe.

Point-of-aim versus point-of-impact: Most modern shotgun barrels are regulated at the factory to place the center of the pattern in line with where the bead on the end



Paper, a marker and a ruler or tape measure is all that's needed for proper patterning. Use a safe backstop.

of the barrel is pointing. Usually a laser is used, and the barrel is actually bent slightly using a mandrel. This is an approximation at best. Factors like adding a variable choke device, such as a Polychoke, can affect the harmonics of the barrel itself. Test this by firing at a single dot, set at 20 yards

CONTINUED ON PAGE 33



Testing #3 steel shot from a modified choke on a goose target at 35 yards.



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STRESING, FROM PAGE 32

from a solid fixed rest. For example, the Browning BPS I harvested a turkey with centers its pattern low and left about nine inches. I compensated for this, and the result was the precisely intended head and neck shot on the bird that was called in. If turkey hunting, you can also compensate by using an optical sight.

Clay target shooting requires everything from wide-open skeet patterns to tight, extra-full choke handicap trap patterns. Sporting clays can require just about anything in between. Begin test firing from a rest, at a dot in the middle of a 30-inch circle. Start at 20 yards, then move out to 30. The loads and shot sizes for clay target shooting are regulated by the rules, so use the same ammunition you plan on shooting with. Look for a nice, even dispersion of pellets, with attention to the outer ring.

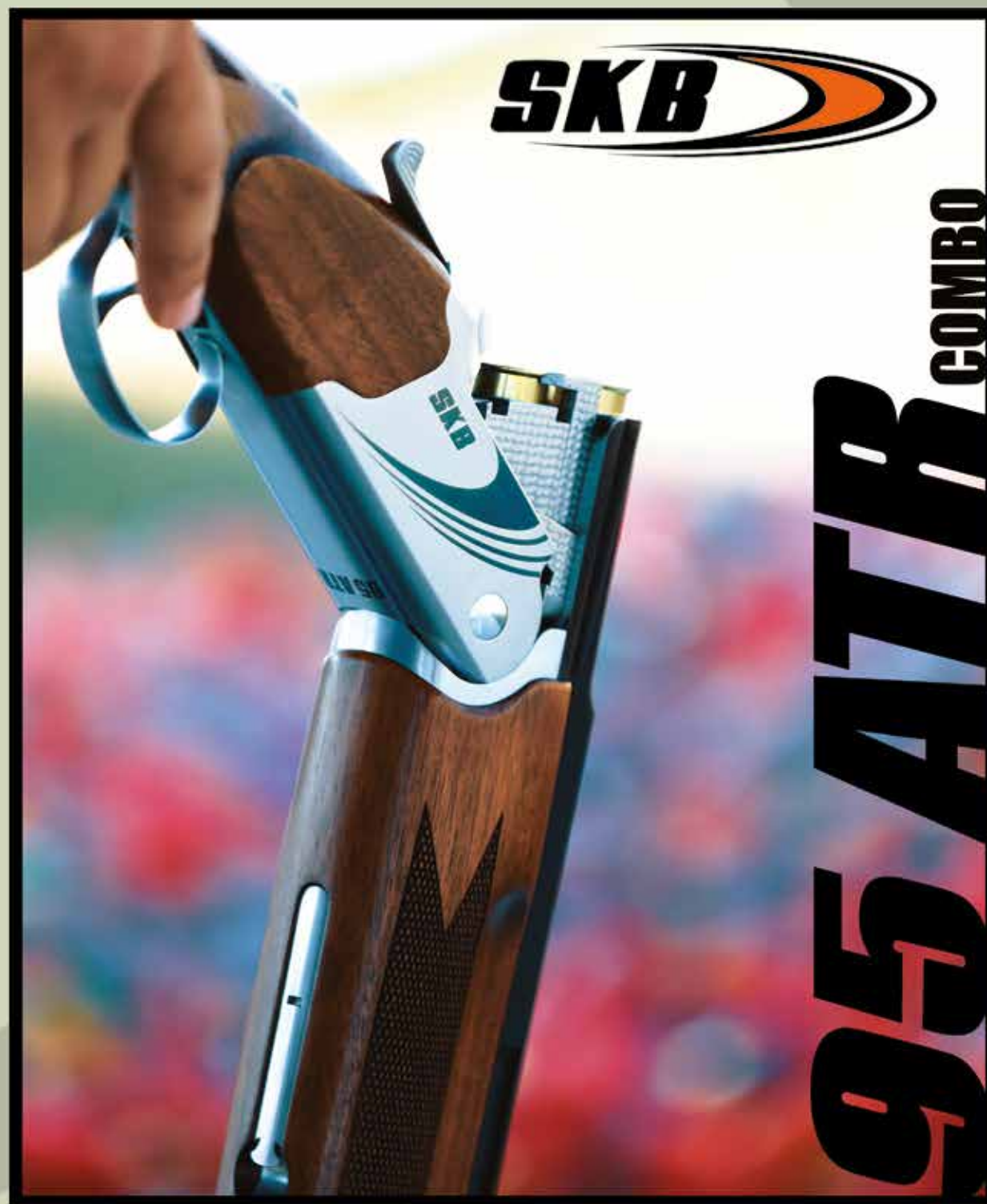
Upland game and waterfowl hunters test to determine the right combination of choke, shot size, and load to deliver an optimum amount of pellets on game at various ranges. The choke and shot size combination for December roosters is going to be different from what you used for doves in September. Begin testing at 20 then 30 yards, and even out to 40. Remember if patterning steel to never use a choke tighter than modified. Again, look for an even dispersion of pellets, with no clumping or wide gaps. Three to five pellets will cleanly harvest about any small game animal or bird if the proper size shot is used. Steel shot users may find a more open choke delivers a better pattern with coarse shot like BB or BBB. If you see signs like vertical stringing of pellets, go to a more open choke.

Time invested at the patterning board will pay off with better scores, and more game in the bag! 🦌

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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www.skbshotguns.com

Explore Wisconsin



SPOTLIGHT | SPOONER



Ah, spring and early summer in the Northwoods

Spooner is your destination for the best possible Spring Break to relax and unwind. Whether you are drawn to gorgeous hiking or Fat Biking trails, the first chilly dip in one of our many lakes or rivers, casting your line and reeling in your first catch of the year, or relaxing at one of our fabulous restaurants featuring outdoor seating, Spooner has you covered. Do all of this and more, all while taking in the fresh air and serenity of Northwest Wisconsin.

For beginning and experienced hikers alike, Hunt Hill Audubon sanctuary has some of the best trails in the area. Their picturesque landscape is the perfect place to start your spring hiking off on the right foot (pun intended). Check out Spooner City Park's trails for more leisurely hiking through a winding treescape.

Does the water call to you once you see the first puddles of melted snow? Do we have news for you. Spooner is home to dozens of lakes and rivers in the area, plus we have almost 1,000 lakes county-wide (not to brag, or anything). The possibilities for fun on the water are endless in the Spring. Want to learn the best way to catch "The Big One" to brag to your friends? Give AAA Sport a call and book a Gill Getter excursion with an experienced guide. Are you more of a relax-with-a-good-snack kind of person? AAA has pontoon rentals, too.

After your sun-filled day, make sure to stop in at many of the local restaurants and bars that offer outdoor seating or an amazing view. Pine Brook Farm, located just eight miles from Spooner, guarantees that you will love to see one of their photo-worthy sunsets on the 85 acres of picturesque farmland they converted into this charming restaurant. Or, enjoy the scenery of historic downtown Spooner as you sip on craft beer and cocktails at Round Man Brewing Co. - the only craft brewery in Washburn County. Boasting 18 taps, eight signature brews and an American-style menu featuring distinctive flavors of the Northwoods, this local brew pub should be on your must-do list.

Plan your Spring outdoor adventure at www.spoonerchamber.org.



Spooner and Washburn County means fun outside and in throughout the spring and summer.

SUZETTE CURTIS

Recipes with Suzette

Lake Trout, White Bass & Cisco



My husband and I have often enjoyed a guided fishing trip on Big Green Lake for Lake Trout, White Bass, and Cisco. With various kids (we have 10) and grandkids (we have 14) joining us, it proves to be an exciting and rewarding family afternoon for all. Of course, the evening dinner is also an extra special treat. The first recipe is a recommendation from one of our favorite guides. Enjoy!

Baked Lake Trout - By Mike & Joanne Norton -
Norton's Fishing & Hunting Adventures

Cooked in a surrounding of hearty stuffing, this is a full meal in one dish.

9x13 baking dish

One 2 to 3 pound (not filleted) lake trout with head and tail

One quart size can of whole tomatoes

One stick of butter

One loaf of bread

3 medium onions, chopped

Mix bread, tomatoes and onions together to make a dressing. Butter bottom of pan. Lay fish on pan bottom. Apply dressing around fish and dot with butter. Bake at 350 degrees for 45 minutes or until fish flakes.

Smoked Cisco

2 ¾ cup pickling salt

2 tsp garlic powder

1 cup brown sugar

2 tsp onion powder

1 tsp nutmeg

Place one third (about 1 cup) of the dry brine mixture into a large zippered plastic bag. Add one fish at a time to the bag, seal, and shake until fish is coated. Remove fish and place in a large non-metal bowl or container (I used a big crock that I have for making refrigerator pickles).

Once fish are coated and placed in bowl, cover and refrigerate 6 to 8 hours. Remove fish from refrigerator; rinse thoroughly. Place rinsed fish on paper towel lined baking sheets and return to refrigerator. Refrigerate uncovered for up to a day. They are ready for smoking when the outer skin feels dry.

Prepare smoker according to your particular manufacturer's directions. Once the temperature has reached 220, place fish on upper grate and cover. Continue smoking, maintaining temperature, for 2 ½ to 3 hours. Fish is done when the skin has taken on a slightly caramel color. Remove fish from smoker and place on drying rack until cooled. The smoked fish can then be frozen, or it will keep in the refrigerator for a week or two depending on how it is packaged. I find that it keeps better wrapped in foil as opposed to wrapping in plastic or plastic bags.

Whitebass Fish Foils

1 pound White Bass fillets

3 T Onion, finely chopped

3 T Butter, divided

3 T Parmesan Cheese

3 T Bell Pepper, finely chopped (I like yellow or orange for this)

½ cup Ketchup

Preheat oven to 350°.

Using a section of aluminum foil large enough to hold all ingredients, grease the bottom with one tablespoon of the butter. Place fish fillets on top along with vegetables. Pour ketchup evenly over all. Dot with remaining butter and sprinkle cheese on top. Fold up the ends of the foil and seal the openings. Place on a baking sheet and cook for about 20 minutes.

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. Contact her at recipesbysuzette@onwisconsinoutdoors.com.

Henry Raises \$78,250 with Donation of 126 Guns for Two Children Undergoing Cancer Treatments

BAYONNE, NJ – February 5, 2020 – Henry Repeating Arms President and Owner, Anthony Imperato, designed and donated 60 rifles for 4-year-old Beckett Burge of Princeton, Texas, and 66 rifles for 3-year-old Sadie Kreinbrink of Ostrander, Ohio, to assist with the medical expenses associated with their leukemia treatments. The firearms were sold directly through Henry Repeating Arms' website and sold out within hours, and serial number 1 of each edition brought in a total of \$8,650 at auction on gunbroker.com. The Burge family is receiving \$35,525, and the Kreinbrink family is receiving \$45,725 from the sale of these rifles.

After a photo of Beckett Burge and his supportive sister went viral, Imperato reached out to offer assistance through Henry's Guns For Great Causes program, a charitable branch of the company that focuses on helping sick children, children's hospitals, veterans' organizations, 2nd Amendment, shooting sports, and wildlife conservation organizations. The "Beat It Like Beckett" edition rifle showcased an engraved and handpainted gold ribbon on the buttstock, the symbol of childhood cancer awareness.

A few months after Sadie Kreinbrink was diagnosed with Embryonal Rhabdomyosarcoma, a malignant childhood tumor requiring 66 weeks of

chemotherapy treatment, Sadie's mother reached out to Henry Repeating Arms, and the "Sweet Sadie" edition rifle was born. The custom Golden Boy Silver Youth rifle displays a bright pink ribbon on the buttstock, which is Sadie's favorite color.

Baron Engraving of Trumbull, CT, donated their engraving and painting services for both rifles.

Henry President and owner, Anthony Imperato, says, "We are so thrilled with our fans and everyone that chose to support the Kreinbrink and Burge family by purchasing one of these rifles. It's initiatives like this that have the potential to show the media and the rest of the world how great of an industry our firearms industry is." He continues, "Firearms manufacturers tend to get a black eye by the media more often than not, so this along with all of our other Guns For Great Causes campaigns should go to show all the good we can do."

To learn more about Henry's Guns For Great Causes program visit: <https://www.henryusa.com/about-us/guns-for-great-causes/>

Henry firearms can only be purchased through a licensed firearms dealer. For more information about Henry Repeating Arms and its products, visit henryusa.com or call 866-200-2354.



The families of 4-year-old Beckett Burge (L) from Princeton, TX and 3-year-old Sadie Kreinbrink of Ostrander, OH (R) are receiving a total of \$78,250 from the sales of rifles donated by Henry Repeating Arms.

The "Beat It Like Beckett" edition rifle (top) and the "Sweet Sadie" edition rifle (bottom) sold out within hours of going up for sale on Henry Repeating Arms' website.



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