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The Turkey Woods

-Stu Bristol



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The Turkey Woods

“Turkey hunters are merely play actors; the “Turkey Woods” their stage.” I penned that slogan for my call making business back in 1983. That’s when I began making turkey calls for friends and relatives. Each time I head out in search of a longbeard I remind myself of that truism.

Obviously as a 200-pound hunter we can’t

The “cluck, purr, kee-kee, fly-down cackle, tree yelps, plain yelps, excited mating yelps” are just a few of the commonly used vocalizations. How successful the hunter is at reproducing these turkey “words” plays a major role in either success or failure.

dress like a hen turkey to sneak up on a gobbler, so it’s critical that we not only sound like a hen turkey but imitate the sounds of nearly everything in the forest.

If you’ve hunted wild turkeys for a few years, stop and list the different vocalizations you used to lure that trophy into shotgun or bow range.

Before daylight we use the eight-note call of the Barred owl to get a gobbler to sound off, giving up its location. Wild turkeys use over 300 different vocalizations in their lifetime but most hunters only try to imitate half a dozen.

The “cluck, purr, kee-kee, fly-down cackle, tree yelps, plain yelps, excited



Biddeford turkey hunter Mike Lowell.

mating yelps” are just a few of the commonly used vocalizations. How successful the hunter is at reproducing these turkey “words” plays a major role in either success or failure.

Knowing when to use each of these vocalizations, at which inflection, cadence and volume come next in the hunters arsenal of calls. Selection of calling device many times will control the hunters options.

The more successful turkey chasers will go afield armed with a vest loaded with; a box call, pot call, usually slate surface, mouth diaphragm and possibly a couple of variations of the basic devices.

The box call is the most foolproof. The hunter merely needs to draw the top paddle across the lips of the call to produce the “yelp.” With the pot and striker call, the calling surface must be cleaned of oxidation then draw the tip of the striker across the surface in a small circular motion to produce yelps. Strike a match action cre-

ates a plain cluck. With either call the less dominant hand holds the call and the dominant hand moves the lid or striker.

The caller, from novice to expert needs to constantly practice different strokes and volumes and listen to audio files of real turkeys

or calling competitions. In the beginning, I used a tape recorder to listen to real turkeys and match my attempts.

Now, entering the “turkey woods” the hunter needs to clear his or her mind. No family or work problems, no daydreaming about fine cars, shotguns and food.

Sit quietly, close your eyes and try to pick out the dozens of forest sounds. Running water, chipmunks, squirrels, crows and songbirds. Next keeping your head still and moving only your eyes, scan the surroundings for movement of any sort. I look for ground squirrels and birds and many times a turkey pops in sight as if magic.

You need to blend in with your surroundings. My good friend and wildlife artist, Randy Julius would meditate, many times with his eyes closed and pick up subtle rustling of leaves or sot clucks and purrs, each one a possible sign of an approaching turkey or flock.



South Of the Kennebec

**by Stu Bristol,
Lyman, ME**

The “turkey woods” is a very special place to be, regardless if you locate a turkey. In the fall the “turkey woods” becomes the deer woods with the same instruction for the hunter.

“Woodsmanship” is a very import part of hunting of all stripes. Understanding your surroundings, “situational awareness,” when it’s alright to move quickly, stealthfully or movement of just the head are all im-

portant aspects of being in the “turkey woods.”

Finally, there are no easy ways to kill a turkey; at least not in my playbook. In deer or turkey hunting there are times when even inexperienced get “lucky” and happen on to a deer or turkey ten minutes into the outing and score a kill.

I hope that never happens very often. When I sat down with the lawyer for (Woods cont. pg 35)

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Please be advised that the late deliveries of the issues of the Northwoods Sporting Journal are the responsibility of the United States Postal Service, which reportedly has experienced slowdowns attributable to Covid, weather conditions, and other supply factors. We regret this situation and remind all subscribers that a full digital edition of the February issue can be seen at www.sportingjournal.com. Click on "issues."

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The Northwoods Sporting Journal is the Northeast's most comprehensive and readable monthly outdoor publication. Published at the trailhead of Maine's sprawling North Woods, the Sporting Journal prides itself on being an independent voice for the region's outdoor community for more than 28 years. Some of our writers are seasoned and specialized outdoors people who will share their know-how and insights; some of our contributors are simply lifelong outdoor people with interesting stories to tell.

Our aim every month is to capture the essence of Northern New England's remarkable outdoor heritage by stirring memories, portraying outdoor humor, and sharing experiences and outdoor knowledge. We also keep our readers up to date with late-breaking outdoor news and hard-hitting editorials about fish and wildlife issues.

Anyone who loves to hunt and fish, or simply finds the Great Outdoors a treasured place, is more than likely to find some special connections amid the pages of the Northwoods Sporting Journal.



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The views and opinions expressed by our monthly columnists do not necessarily reflect the views of this publication.



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Anticosti - Pg 62
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Green Mountain Report - Pg 52
 By Bradley Carleton



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The Northwoods Bowhunter

by Brian Smith,
Machiasport, ME

Maine Spring Turkey season opens on April 30 for youth hunters and May 2nd for adults with a two bearded bird limit for most of the state. Hopefully this spring will be the last year you will be required to register your gobbler in person. Starting with the spring 2023 season, IF&W will be required to implement an online registration system thanks to the persistence of several sporting groups, bipartisan pres-

sure from the legislature and citizens that submitted testimony. Maine will join the majority of other states that allow you to call in or

The new law will allow you to register your gobbler with your smart phone from the field providing for more time to hunt and still get to work on time.

register your kill online.

My first turkey harvest was on NY State Land 35 years ago and was able to simply phone in the

information. I and other members of the IF&W Advisory Council advocated for on line registration in March 2020 when the pandemic was causing such restrictions on hunters and businesses. Instead, the registration requirement

was suspended for that spring resulting in very minimal harvest data. The \$2 tagging fee will have little financial impact on registration stations and the hassle for a business to tie up an employee for 20-30 minutes will be alleviated.

As any turkey hunter knows, you might harvest your bird two or more hours or before a tagging station opens. The new law will allow you to register your gobbler with your smart phone from the field providing for more time to hunt and still get to work on time.

Unfortunately, beginning in September 2021 and continuing for the next two falls, registration of your wild turkey harvest will not be required during the fall seasons resulting in poor data collection and perhaps an over harvest. Several states are seeing turkey populations on decline and are reducing bag limits due in part to over harvesting of hens in fall seasons. Hopefully Maine will continue wise hunt and population management of our grandest game bird so that future generations have the same quality hunt that we experience now.

Unlike deer, bear and

moose, wild turkeys can see color, thus camouflage is essential when hunting them. For safety reasons, avoid wearing red, white and blue, the

Scouting is essential to find good areas to hunt with several back up locations available in case other hunters find your first spot. I've rarely been



The author with a fall turkey taken with a bow.

colors of a gobbler's head. Turkeys are quick to pick out movement, thus when bow hunting them, a blind of some type will hide your movements when drawing and increase your odds for success. I often use a pop up hub blind with a comfortable swivel stool to sit on and practice drawing and shooting from that position. Please obtain landowner permission to set up blinds labeled with your name, town and phone number. You can also use natural cover or blind materials and it is possible to stalk adult toms using thick cover and stealthy movements. I'm going try expandable broad heads for the first time this year and will report back on the results.

denied permission to hunt turkeys from farmers or landowners that might not allow deer hunting on their properties. A few years ago, I was hunting a Game Warden friend's family farm in Waldo County. I had worked several toms that morning, but could not get the perfect shot with a bow. Eventually I spied a long beard with several jakes feeding toward the back of a field. I worked my way to a spot where I expected them to feed and knelt behind a felled tree while softly clucking. There was no time to get a decoy set before they were on me.

When the gobbler's head went behind a tree at 20 yards, I drew my

(Turkey cont. pg 35)



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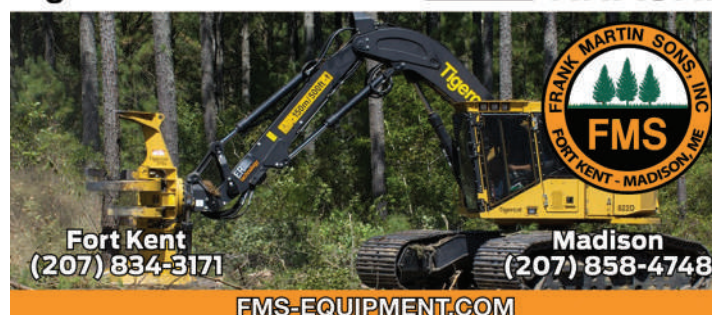
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The Carrot Nymph

This month's selection is the Carrot Nymph. This 90 year old nymph was originated by Rube

like a mottled feather for tailing. Tie on the tailing fibers and level the thread winds. Tie on your choice

thread, orange Uni-stretch, or orange dubbing. Wind on a body and leave room for a thorax; I use peacock



Cross in the Catskills. I saw it first when I was stationed in Montana and it was one of those flies that when it was on, it was really on. You won't see this one much, but it belongs in your box-especially in the early season.

Recipes for the Carrot Nymph

Thread – Black

Hook – 2x long nymph hook (Mustad 9671), size 12

Tail – Hackle fibers

Body – Orange floss

Thorax – Peacock herl

The hook is a common nymph hook; I use Mustad because that's what I have. The tail is any brownish hackle fibers you have, I

of body material. The body can be orange floss, orange

herl. You can substitute black ostrich, black dub-

bing, or small black chenille. That completes the simple version of the fly and as you can tell, there is a lot of room for substitutions. You can add a hackle ahead of the thorax and make it a dry fly. Or you can use a hen hackle feather and fish it as a soft hackle. You can add a rib, copper wire would be my choice.

This is an old school fly that pops up in differ-

The Tyer's Corner by Hugh Kelly, Detroit, ME



ent regions for a reason, it worked then and it will work now.

Hugh Kelly has fly fished and tied his own flies for over 40 years. He and his family live in Detroit where he ties flies, drinks Moxie and plans fishing trips. He can be reached at hkellymaine@gmail.com and writes a fly tying blog at puckerbrushflies.com

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EDITORIAL

Kids and Motorboats

When I was a chubby 13-year old boy, I won the Maine Soap Box Derby race in Brewer. First prize was a chance to race my derby, "The Ole Lucky 7" in Akron, Ohio. A spanking new 12-foot aluminum boat and 5 hp Scott-Atwater outboard motor was also presented to me. For a kid who loved to fish, this was a dream come true. Imagine! A new boat and motor of my very own!

During my teen years, I enjoyed many wonderful fishing moments in that special boat, sometimes alone and sometimes with a buddy.

There weren't that many boating regulations in those days. My father coached me in the safe and proper operation of the outboard before I was allowed to "solo." Later on, as a father I, too, taught my sons the finer points of safe boating practices. Both boys took turns delivering the Bangor Daily News by boat at Branch Lake when they were 11 to 12 years old. Some mornings, in heavy morning fog, I would watch them head across the lake with a load of newspapers. To my knowledge, they never got lost in the fog, never hit a rock, and never had a problem operating the outboard – a 15 hp Evinrude.

Today, under the present law, my sons would be operating that boat on the margins of legality. If a mandatory boating education law, LD 1663, now being debated had been the law my boys would have been operating illegally. As their parent, I would have been subjected to a \$500 fine.

LD 1663, which the Maine Department of Fish and Wildlife plans to support, will create a mandatory boating education requirement in Maine. Here is the summary statement of LD 1663:

This bill creates a mandatory boating safety course requirement for individuals born after January 1, 2002 for the operation of motorboats propelled by machinery over 10 horsepower on Maine waters beginning January 1, 2023. The bill establishes a minimum age of 16 for operation of a motorboat propelled by machinery over 10 horsepower and requires the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to establish a program for boating safety education certification. This bill also requires a mandatory boating safety course for an individual born after January 1, 2002 who operates a personal watercraft.

The support argument for this bill is

that states with mandatory boating education experience lower boating fatalities than states without the requirement.

I am not sure where I stand on this one. These are changing times, I concede. And I lament the passing of those days when parents mentored their youngsters and held them accountable. We do have an ATV regulation that requires kids 10-16 years to pass a safety course for solo ATV operation.

Snowsledders, however, operate under no similar regulatory restraints. All of the snowmobile safety courses are strictly voluntary. If the mandatory boating education law passes the same youngster who must be state certified to operate an outboard motor would be legal to operate a high-powered snowsled without any required state certification.

Does this make sense?

There is a freedom-erosion issue as well. In our modern frenzy to create a zero risk society we give away a little more of our personal freedom to state government.

- VPR



LETTERS



Bobcat Deer Kill

To the Editor:

A friend of mine said I should submit this story to your magazine. I told him it was probably too gruesome for the readership, but I'll send it in. So here goes.

I have been a subscriber to your magazine for many years and thoroughly enjoy every issue. I realize you have a consistent group of writers who contribute monthly to your magazine. So there is probably no space for a short clip like this. But the accompanying pictures are pretty neat.



Several weeks ago on the morning of February 6, I was outside doing some chores and walked around the side of my barn, and there, 30 feet from the barn was a dead deer, a 140 lb +/- buck that had dropped its antlers. It startled me and as I investigated what had happened, I came across bobcat tracks leading up to and away

from the kill. I had seen bobcat tracks in the snow the day before in the same area right next to my barn. The barn is only 40 feet from my house.



Now I live at the end of a dirt road on 46 acres and as such, we have a lot of wildlife around our home, which I enjoy. We have seen the occasional bobcat around for many years.

So I took pictures of the kill site and tracks and followed the bobcat's track away from the site to see where it had gone. As I didn't want the deer lying next to my house attracting scavengers, I hooked it up to my ATV and dragged it about 1000 feet away to a hillside overlooking my lower field. There I left it, set up a trail camera to see what would feed on it, and also to hopefully catch a picture of the bobcat. I know they will come back to a kill for several days. But with the deer being dragged a thousand feet away, well, I assumed she would eventually find the

carcass.

I had also sent the pictures of the kill site and prints to Andrew Timmins and Dan Bergeron at NH Fish and Game to confirm my suspicions, which they both did...bobcat kill.

So, I had few pictures the first couple of days as the carcass was pretty frozen. But when we had a warm-up several days later, they came...red foxes, crows, coyote, and amazingly, a bald eagle which I have on video and is included in the series of photos attached. Finally, the bobcat did show up one evening and I assume it is (Letters cont. pg 27)

The Hunting Paradox: Peeling the Onion

The letter took me by surprise. A friend, who cares deeply about the environment and wildlife, blamed me for killing for fun and trophies, “blood-dripping” superiority over animals, and crimes against the planet. A photograph of my recent moose hunt in our annual Christmas letters sparked the vitriol. We had a discussion about hunting in the past. I apparently did not succeed at explaining my philosophy. It was an awkward conversation. End of discussion.

I responded with a 6-page letter pointing out her hypocrisy (she eats meat and lets her cat roam freely), and stumbled over words trying to articulate the kernel of why hunting was important to me. Full of hurt and anger, I wrote some things I wish I hadn’t, but also felt the need to defend what is at the core of who I am. We will see if the friendship lasts.

Who am I to justify taking the life of a sentient being, another animal? I started by peeling back the layers of the onion of the reasons we fish or hunt

or fish – to spend time outdoors, for camaraderie, tradition, to challenge ourselves, or for food. Is hunting necessary in a 2022? I could go birding to be out-



doors. I could canoe, hike, or go camping to fulfill my need for camaraderie and family traditions. I could challenge myself outdoors by taking up ice climbing or jog every day. I could pay someone else to do my killing, butchering, and packaging of meat. I do all of these things, but none fulfill my need to hunt.

The answer came to me a few weeks later while snowshoeing in winter deer yard. Two feet of snow had piled up in the woods. On the hoof-beaten trail I noticed a faint spray of fine, red crystals periodically staining the snow. Was it a substance from the gray birches overhead? I re-

moved my chopper mitts and melted a few of the crystals between my fingers. It looked like blood. The further I went, the more frequent the stains. A patch of deer hair was snagged on a balsam fir and wafted in the breeze. Ravens croaked from the cedar swamp ahead, and I steeled myself for the

The story of a violent struggle was written in the bloodied snow. Little remained of the carcass; a hoof here, the chewed head of the young deer there. Swaths of blood stained the tangled alders. Life is not possible without death; often a violent death in nature.

scene I knew that lie ahead.

The story of a violent struggle was written in the bloodied snow. Little remained of the carcass; a hoof here, the chewed head of the young deer there. Swaths of blood stained the tangled alders. Life is not possible without death; often a violent death in nature. Here, the fangs from thousands of millennia continued to shape the evolution of the deer that I love. Have the atlatl and cunning of the human predator done the same?

Turn the tables. Was it the predator cave lion or prey gazelle, or both, that molded our evolution on the African plains? What prompted that first hominid to stand and run – fear or food?

Homo sapiens have the blessing or curse to gaze deep into the campfire and try to explain our complex human situation. And so, a handful of anthropologists, philosophers, ecologists, and a few thoughtful hunters, have plumbed the depths of our human evo-

lution and psyche asking these same, penetrating questions.

In *The Hunting Hypothesis* (1976), anthropologist Robert Ardrey argued that the human species evolved with hunting, and the pursuit of swift prey profoundly influenced our

Northwoods Sketchbook

by Mark McCollough,
Hampden, ME



sionary, and hunter Paul Shepard took this thesis one step farther in his many books including *The Tender Carnivore and the Sacred Game* (1973) and *Coming Home to the Pleistocene* (1998). He posited that we are creatures of the Pleistocene, having spent

evolution. A controversial proposition for its time, it is now widely scientifically accepted that hunting is a significant part of what makes us human – evolutionarily, intellectually, socially, culturally, physiologically, and yes, even spiritually. Humans were hunters and gatherers for hundreds of millennia before we domesticated the first animals or took up the plow a mere 7,000 to 10,000 years ago. Our species are hunters and gatherers by nature. We cannot escape that evolutionary legacy as long as our species persists.

Human ecologist, vi-

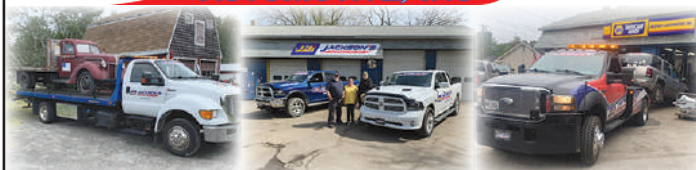
nearly all our social history as hunters and gatherers. Encoded in our DNA is all that our species needs to live on Earth. He and ecologist Jared Diamond proposed that human history took a “wrong turn” when we domesticated animals and developed agriculture. Agriculture spawned civilization as we know it, but led to our ecological downturn – a selfish economy of hoarding, the invention of countries and war, unsustainable increases in human populations, systematically destroying the Earth’s ecosystems, and transposing our belief (Paradox cont. pg 35)

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“A Hiker’s Life”

by Carey Kish,
Mt. Desert Island, ME



For nearly a month, Mount Shasta has figured large in the daily panorama as the Pacific Crest Trail makes an enormous westerly arc around the massive mountain. The 14,179-foot peak is the second highest in the Cascade Range and the fifth highest in California. In another 50 miles, the

ice axe, but it’s been much more manageable than the winter mountaineering I would’ve experienced trying to push straight through the Sierra.

On the way into Kennedy Meadows, I developed gastrointestinal issues, which made the 27 hours of travel to Oregon

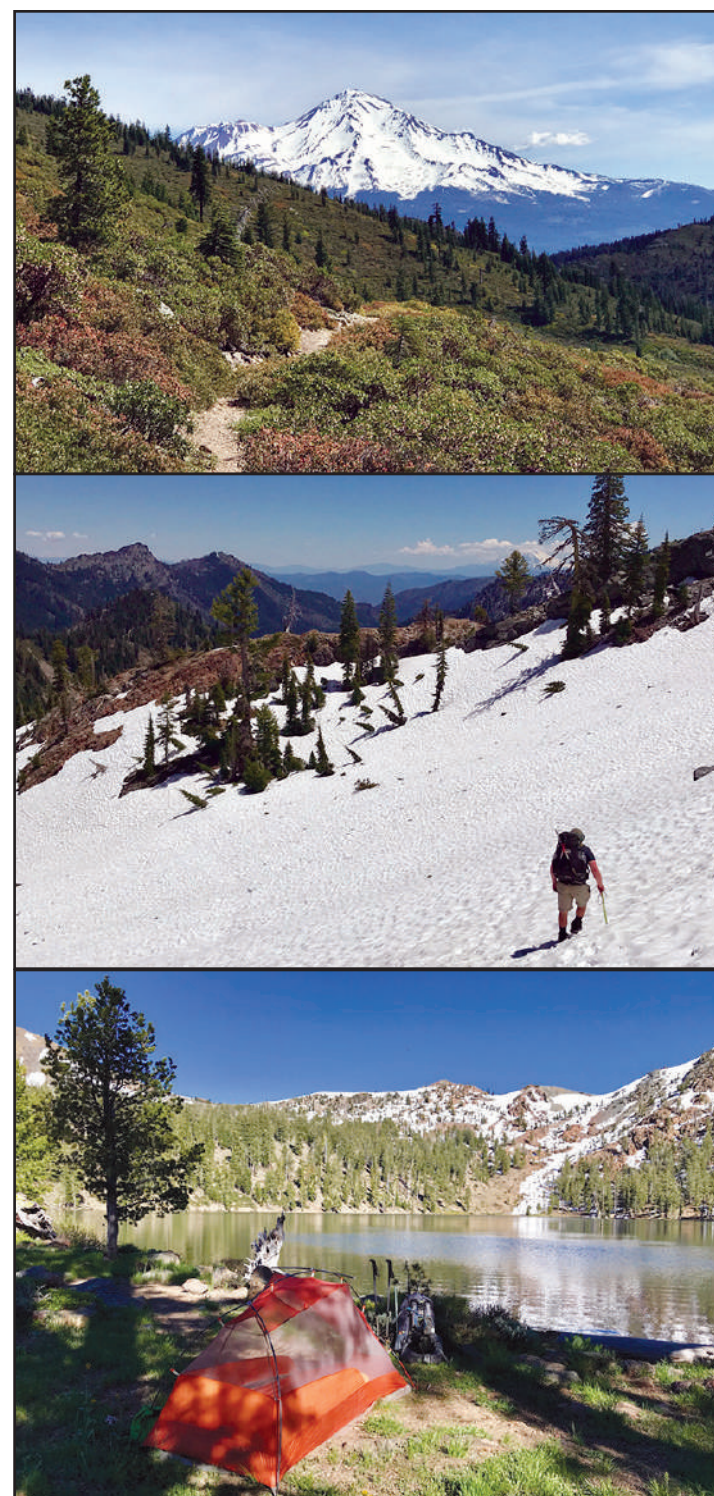
company of “Ranger” and “High Five.” The striking cone of 9,945-foot Mount McLoughlin shadowed the hike for the first few days through the black lava beds and old growth forests of the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest.

A record heat wave clamped down as we crossed the California state line into Klamath National Forest, sending temperatures up over 100 degrees. The bugs came out in force, too, adding to the enjoyment. The 5,000-foot descent from Devil’s Peak into Seiad Valley was a true sweat fest in the high humidity, and the 6,000-foot climb out was equally brutal.

All was forgotten upon entering the Marble Mountain Wilderness, 241,000 acres of craggy peaks, exquisite lakes, tumbling creeks, grassy meadows and grand views. The Russian Wilderness followed, and then the astounding Trinity Alps Wilderness, a 40-mile segment that was said to be impassable due to dangerous snow conditions. We completed it with no problem in three glorious days, easily the finest walking of the trip to date.

In the Shasta-Trinity National Forest, I reached Upper Deadfall Lake at 7,250 feet beneath the snow covered walls of Mount Eddy at the end of a 19-mile day and pitched camp on a small patch of gravel just 10 feet from the water. That evening, I gazed out at the lovely scene before me and was reminded once again why I am hiking the PCT.

I walk carefree every



day from morning till evening. I carry a backpack that holds my few worldly possessions at the moment. I have no schedule. I stop, look and listen at will to the beauty of Mother Nature. I eat what I want when I want (about 3,500 calories a day). I sleep comfortably under the stars every night.

My entire being overflows with gratitude for this precious opportunity to spend six months simply putting one foot in front of the other. Such is the

true essence and allure of long-distance hiking. I’ve covered almost 1,000 trail miles, and when I report next, I should be in the Sierra. Until then, happy trails.



Carey Kish of Mount Desert Island, ME is editor of the AMC Maine Mountain Guide and author of the AMC’s Best Day Hikes Along the Maine Coast. His new book, *Beer Hiking New England*, will be available in Spring 2022.

A record heat wave clamped down as we crossed the California state line into Klamath National Forest, sending temperatures up over 100 degrees. The bugs came out in force, too, adding to the enjoyment.

PCT will bear south away from Shasta and head for Lassen Volcanic National Park before connecting with the high peaks of the Sierra Nevada.

The decision to leave the northbound trail at Kennedy Meadows at mile 702 at the start of the monumentally snowy Sierra (212% of normal snowpack by some reports) and jump up to southern Oregon to trek south has proven to be a perfect plan. The hiking has been splendid, the weather summer-like and the trail relatively snow-free. I’ve encountered a few stretches that required MICROspikes and even my

— a hitched ride, two buses, two trains and another bus — a bit of a nightmare. By the time I got to Medford, I was really sick, necessitating a visit to an urgent care facility. Infectious diarrhea, probably from E. coli or Giardia, was the diagnosis, and the cure was antibiotics. Test results later came back negative, so the true culprit was likely a virus — norovirus, perhaps, according to the nurse practitioner. In any case, I was terribly ill and spent nine days off trail recovering.

I returned to the PCT at Highway 140 near Fish Lake, Oregon, and struck off southbound in the

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The field dressing is done and your quarry is loaded. The endorphins your body released are fading and your nerves are finally calming. You pack away your gear and your rifle, drop your truck

throughout the season; all gathered around your truck as the scale tells its tale. It is a communal moment and it feels great.

Electronic Registration

A bill introduced to

game animals. Cost, effects on biological data collection, veracity of self-reported harvests and compliance were all key issues. The full MDIFW report was issued in January.

In Maine, hunters are very fortunate to have wildlife biologists so deeply embedded in the decisions that determine bag

A bill introduced to the Maine legislature last year, LD 1213 “An Act To Provide the Option of Online or Telephonic Tagging of Harvested Big Game Animals” made its way through the Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife resulting in a divided report.

limits and seasons, wildlife and herd health and carrying capacity. In some states, game commissions are appointed officials with little or no scientific wildlife background. Wildlife management decisions are made without the benefit of solid, verifiable data – the data our wildlife biologists count on collecting at Maine game tagging stations. When decisions are made using information solely gleaned from electronic tagging, it usually results in a more conservative approach to game management (short seasons, restrictive bag limits, and curtailment of hunting methods).

MDIFW’s report notes that in New York

State, where self-reported electronic tagging is fully implemented, the compliance rate is 45 – 50%. Can you imagine the repercussions on Maine’s deer, moose and black bear populations if only half of successful hunters reported their harvest? I can and I don’t think it paints a rosy

Is Change Good?
A lot of times, the old statement holds true. Innovations in the firearm and ammunition industry increase our ability to shoot straighter, farther and bolster confidence in our shot. Climbing a well-made and sturdy commercial tree stand in the snow beats



into drive and head to the tagging station. Along the way, the film reel of your hunt plays in your mind. The moment the trigger breaks, the exhilaration of success and the realization of knowing the work has just begun. As you pull into the game tagging station and back up to the game pole, folks are already looking your way. The congratulations begin. Where did you get it? What rifle did you use? An eclectic group of fellow hunters, passers-by, station staff and tourists filling their tank at the pump all mingle, striking up conversations with topics ranging from the best weeks of any given season, personal experiences and stories about what they saw here and there

the Maine legislature last year, LD 1213 “An Act To Provide the Option of Online or Telephonic Tagging of Harvested Big Game Animals” made its way through the Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife resulting in a divided report. The Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife were tasked with providing a study of the impacts of electronic tagging of harvested big

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The Gun Cabinet

by John Floyd,
Webster Plantation, ME



picture.

Tooth collection for aging, reproductive tract collection, antler measurements, weight, sex and location of harvest are vital to effective game management. Electronic tagging of big game animals not only opens the door to non-reporting (poaching), loss of vital tools MDIFW biologists need, it strips away another layer of Maine hunting tradition. Electronic tagging may have some benefits – ease of reporting for hunters and meat care being top in my eyes but do we really need everything to be easy? Should we not have to have skin in the game and work hard to earn our game? Isn’t that part of what makes us who we are?

ascending slick wooden cleats nailed to tree. Better clothing and footwear keeps us warmer and makes our long sit in the hunting woods more comfortable. But we shouldn’t be so eager to change long-steeped traditions; especially when those traditions define the very heart and soul of who we are as sportsmen, our culture and why we hunt in the first place.



John is a Registered Maine Guide, an NRA Certified Instructor and is the owner of Tucker Ridge Outdoors in Webster Plantation, Maine. He also works as an outdoors writer and can be reached at john@tuckerridge.me

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Muzzleloading Afield

by Al Raychard,
Lyman, ME

I've killed turkeys with several different weapons including my trusty Remington Model 870 12 gauge and muzzleloading rifle after switching the barrel to a shotgun barrel. Each type of weapon used had its unique challenges, and I have fond memories in recent years they can still be somewhat cumbersome and restrictive of movement in some hunting situations. Crossbows also have their range limitations, and just like hunting with a muzzleloader shotgun, that first shot has to count. With time, practice

When practicing, don't just concentrate on distance. It's important to determine arrow drop, acceptable range and so forth but practice as you would when hunting, from a sitting position.

of the birds taken. But since regulations were passed allowing the use a crossbow has been my weapon of choice.

When it comes to hunting birds, or any game for that matter, crossbows present their own unique challenges. Although crossbows have become lighter and more compact

and patience these and other inherent challenges can be overcome and the crossbow will prove, not only a worthwhile weapon choice, but an enjoyable one as well.

With that in mind here are a few things I've learned over the years and tips that should prove helpful.

KNOW YOUR RANGE LIMITATIONS

I'm not talking about the range limitations of your crossbow. Many today are capable of shooting 40 and 50-yards, even more with sufficient speed and accuracy to kill a bird. I'm referring to your limita-

tions. My personal comfort zone with my crossbow is 40-yards or so, and the situation and opportunity for shot placement has to be perfect. Ideally, I prefer closer shots. Accurate shooting ability from hunter-to-hunter varies, especially at long range.

That's true with a rifle, shotgun or vertical bow and it's certainly true with a crossbow. Knowing what your accurate range limitation is can mean the difference between a miss, or worse yet a wounded bird. Plus it's just being an ethical hunter.



Hunting turkeys with a crossbow has its unique challenges but is a lot of fun.

PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE

The more you shoot the better and more accurate shot you will be. It just makes sense. The more you do something, anything, the better you will be at it. Practicing whenever the opportunity knocks will help determine how far you can shoot

accurately. This is important considering a wild turkey is a rather small target and a turkey's vitals are even smaller, about the size of baseball. You might kill a bird with an arrow if you miss the vitals but if you do it's be dead, dead!

When practicing, don't just concentrate on distance. It's important to determine arrow drop, acceptable range and so forth but practice as you would when hunting, from a sitting position. And take some shots when swinging to the left or right. Ideally a bird will present a shot at 12 o'clock but gobblers don't always cooperate or

Enjoy the Breeze. Not the Bugs.

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(Tips cont. pg 13)

Tips

(Cont. from pg 12)

offer the ideal shot opportunity. One other thing, it helps to use a full-size turkey decoy when practicing. A bullseye target will help in the accuracy and range departments but a turkey decoy will help develop accuracy to the vitals.

USE A SHOOTING AID

My crossbow weighs in at around seven pounds, give or take. I don't find it overly heavy until I've held it in a shooting position for several minutes. When that happens it can start to get fidgety. Birds rarely step right up and offer a perfect shot which necessitates holding in a shooting position with weapon up for long periods. A monopod, bipod or shooting stick will make the task easier. I don't hunt without one and it really makes a difference.

CONSIDER A BLIND

Blinds don't always work in ever hunting situation but if you've done

your preseason scouting, have time to set one up, especially prior to the season opener they do have their advantages. Topping the list is total concealment which is always important when hunting turkeys. Blinds are also forgiving of movement and offer a more comfortable hunting experience. Something to keep in mind if mentoring youngsters. When set up strategically blinds can also help get birds in close for more accurate arrow placements.

A WORD ON BROADHEADS

Every bowhunter has a favorite broadhead design. When hunting deer, bear and larger game pass through shots are important but they are less important when hunting turkey. An arrow that doesn't pass through may even be beneficial preventing a bid from taking flight, running off while creating more damage in either attempt. With today's high-draw crossbows, speed and delivered energy at the

average shooting range, and considering a turkey's body isn't that tough pass through shots are a good possibility regardless of broadhead design. But because they fly more like a field point I prefer mechanical heads on my 175 pound draw crossbow. To me, the biggest consideration is cutting size. Broadheads with 1-3/4-inch to 2-inch or slightly more cutting radius will be more forgiving of shots slightly off the mark and overall cause sufficient body and internal damage. I've never seen any reason for the so-call "guillotine" heads. I've shot them but wasn't really impressed for several reasons and when crossbow hunting I don't care for head/neck shots, for what they are intended.

Al Raychard and wife Diane live on 43+/- acres in Lyman, Maine that offers good deer and turkey hunting opportunities which they both enjoy. If the property had a trout stream it would be true paradise. Al can be reached at al-raychard@sacoriver.net

1		2		3				4
		5						
				6		7		
8								
	9	10		11				
12								13
		14						
15					16			

Across

2 --- Pond, Penobscot County source of Yellow Perch and Smallmouth Bass

6 --- River, short Scar-

borough watercourse

8 Nocturnal flyer

9 --- Wirehaired Vizsla

14 Standard ---, a retriever

15 The outdoorsman's

Down

1 Pumpkinseed ---, or kiver

3 Yellow-throated songbird

4 Opportunist hunter and scavenger

5 Eastern --- Snake

7 Red Lynx

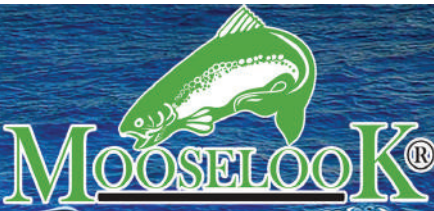
10 --- Chain Lake, Aurora

11 --- Eye Mountain, Oxford County

12 White-billed waterbird, which is not a duck

13 --- Bay State Park, Moosehead Lake

(Answers on pg 53)

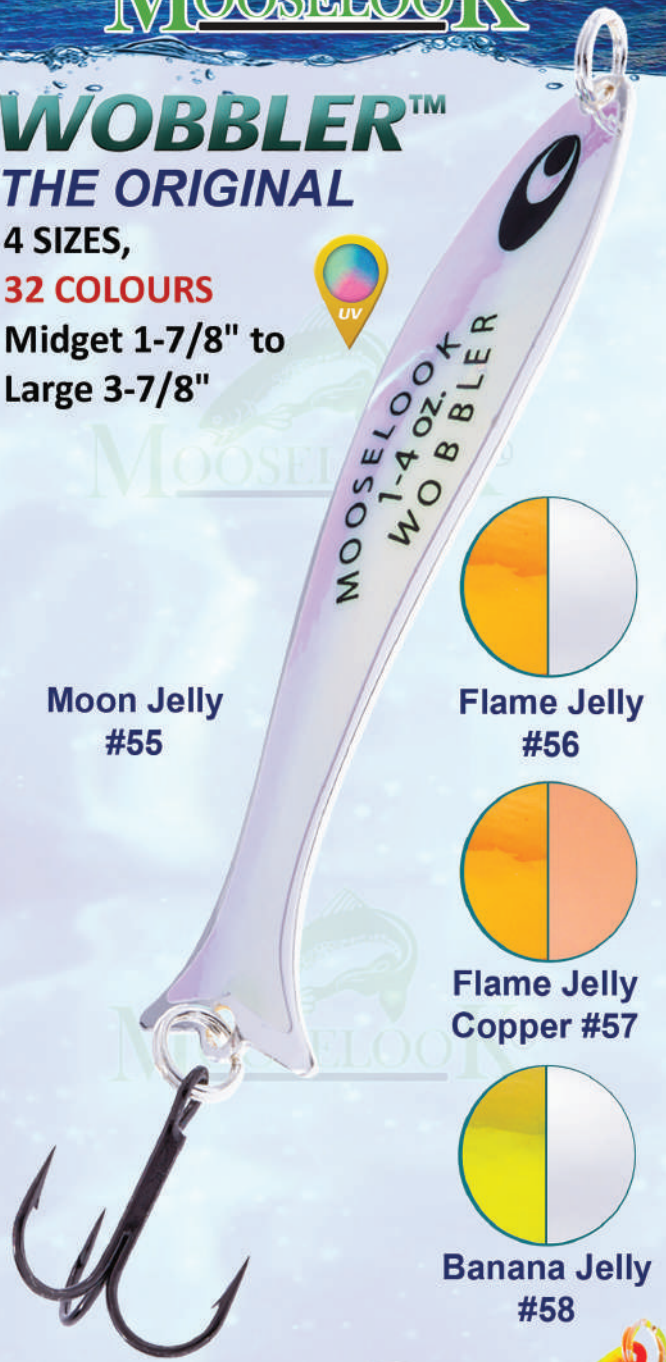


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Outdoor News - April 2022

Edited by V. Paul Reynolds

April is – depending upon whether you are an optimist or a pessimist – the month of the Seasonal Awakening or the month of the Big Mud. Even the pessimist can take heart that at least in April there is light at the end of the tunnel. For our hard-pressed deer population and other wild critters, April can be a make or break month. An early green up can make the difference for them between survival or death. Most outdoor folks take enjoyment in the slow but inexorable coming of spring – the budding, the smell of damp earth, and the formations of geese winging north. Fishing can be slow, especially when winter ice still hugs the stream banks and the biting north wind discourages all but the heartiest boat anglers. There are some good things in Maine in April, though: turkey season is near and camps can be opened without bugs to deal with. So bring on April, and then we can embrace May with all of the real blessings of spring in Maine.

VT Warden of the Year

State Game Warden Jeremy Schmid of Cambridge is Vermont's Game Warden of the Year. A game warden since 2015, Schmid was nominated by his peers and received the award in recognition of his excellent service.

"I want to thank Jeremy for his outstanding performance in protecting Vermont's fish and wildlife resources and serving the people of Vermont," said

Vermont Fish and Wildlife Commissioner Christopher Herrick. "Warden Schmid was chosen for his integrity, professionalism and high motivation in all of his work duties, and because he has earned respect from other wardens and the public."

"The annual Warden of the Year announcement is one that always fills me with great pride for our department," said Colonel Jason Batchelder, Vermont's chief game warden. "This year, through dedication and outstanding service to Vermont, Senior Warden Jeremy Schmid has risen to the top."

"Jeremy's warden work, caseload and time spent educating the public are second to none," added Batchelder. "Jeremy has the ability to sit in the weeds waiting for a poacher to return to a crime scene, to educate a person about a troublesome bear, and to bring a fair and amicable conclusion to a mistake made by an honest hunter -- all in the same day."

Jeremy Schmid's warden district includes the towns of Cambridge, Underhill, Essex, Jericho, Williston, Richmond, and Bolton.

Mass Trout Stocking

MassWildlife staff are stocking nearly 500,000 brook, rainbow, brown, and tiger trout across Massachusetts this year. Stocking began in early March, and 75% of the trout will be over 12 inches!

Maine Snowsled Crash

Two young girls

were injured in a snowmobile crash this winter off the Millay Hill Road in New Portland.

At approximately 12:10 p.m. a nine- and ten-year-old girl were snowmobiling on family property in New Portland when they lost control of their 1988 Ski-Doo and crashed into the trees. Neither girl was wearing a helmet. The two girls were transported to Franklin Memorial Hospital in Farmington, then Life-flighted to Maine Medical Center in Portland with trauma to their head, chest and back.

The Maine Warden Service, NorthStar Ambulance, Franklin SO and New Portland Fire and Rescue all responded to the crash. Additional information will be released as it becomes available.

Schoodic Lake Charity Bass Tournament

The Schoodic Lake Charity Bass Tournament will be on Sunday, July 10, 2022. Mark your calendars today! Last year we were one of two tournaments with the largest first place payout. This makes the tournament appealing to anglers because of the cash purse. Spokesmen announced a new home for the bass tournament. In an effort to continue fishing



conservation, they have partnered with Penobscot County Conservation Association. The tournament will still be run and managed by Rachel McMannus with proceeds going to a deserving charity.

Email: schoodic.charity.bass@gmail.com

Maine Moose Lottery

Dreaming of the hunt of a lifetime? The 2022 Maine moose permit lottery application process is now open. Applications for the moose permit lottery will be accepted online only.

To apply online, go to mefishwildlife.com and fill out the online moose permit application. There, you will be able to indicate several preferences, including which wildlife management districts (WMD) you are willing to accept a permit in, and if you would



accept a permit in another WMD if your name is drawn and all of your top choices are filled. You will also be able to select your preferred hunting season, whether or not you would accept an antlerless permit, and your choice of a sub-permittee. You will also be asked if you want to apply for the Adaptive Unit Hunt (WMD 4A)

Applications must be completed by 11:59 pm

(ET) on May 12, 2022.

The 2022 moose lottery permit drawing will take place June 11, 2022.

For more information about moose hunting in Maine and the moose permit lottery, please visit: mefishwildlife.com

Have a question? Check out our frequently asked questions and answers.

On March 3, Vermont State Game Wardens and collaborating agencies seized seven firearms and approximately 3,000 rounds of ammunition alleged to have been illegally possessed, as well as approximately 880 bags of suspected heroin and fentanyl and a large amount of U.S. currency.

The seizures took place during execution of a search warrant for evidence of deer taken illegally and for the illegal possession of firearms in Athens, Vermont.

Along with Vermont State Game Wardens, collaborating law enforcement included Special Agents from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms and Explosives, U.S. Customs and Border Protection Air and Marine Operations, and the Vermont State Police.

"This case is a great example of the cooperation between the Vermont Warden Service and its state and federal partners in law enforcement," said Game Warden Colonel Jason Batchelder. "This is an on-going investigation and further information will be forthcoming at an appropriate time."

(News cont. pg 15)

News

(Cont. from pg 14)

NH Hunter Education Courses



If you need to complete a hunter education class, sign up now to reserve space in a class this spring or summer. Whether you want to enroll in a classroom experience or would prefer to learn online, register at www.huntnh.com/hunting/hunter-ed.html. Select "Find a Hunter Education Course," select a traditional or online class, then complete the registration to join. Walk-ins are accepted on a space-available basis, but there are no guarantees; pre-registration is highly recommended.

"Spring and summer are your best bets to be sure of getting into a course," says New Hampshire Fish and Game Hunter Education Coordinator Josh Mackay.

Hunter education is required in New Hampshire before a new hunter can purchase his or her first hunting license. If you are age 16 or older, a license to hunt is mandatory. To meet this requirement, the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department offers classes around the state. Participants must be at least 12 years old by the last day of the course to achieve certification in basic Hunter Education.

Hunters who purchased an Apprentice Hunting License last year must take Hunter Educa-

tion before they can purchase a hunting license. The Apprentice Hunting License allows people to hunt under the guidance of an experienced hunter, without first taking Hunter Education. Learn more at www.huntnh.com/hunting/apprentice.html.

For more information on Hunter Education in New Hampshire, visit

www.huntnh.com/hunting/hunter-ed.html, or call (603) 271-3214.

NH Turkey Hunter Program

Registration is now open for a special turkey hunting program co-sponsored by the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department and local National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF) chapters on March 26. This workshop is designed for new or novice turkey hunters in preparation for the 2022 spring turkey hunting sea-



(Photo by Helga Cota)

son, which opens on May 1 and runs through May 31.

The workshop is dedicated to teaching you everything you need to know to have a safe and successful turkey hunt, including choosing a shotgun and ammunition, scouting for birds, how and when to call, what gear you will need, the regulations that apply to turkey hunting,

and much more.

To register and attend, you must be at least 18 years of age. Participants ages 10-18 may attend with a registered parent or guardian, but both participants must register for the event in advance. The cost is \$40 per person. The fee includes materials, instruction, at least one turkey call to take home for practice, lunch, and a one-year membership to the National Wild Turkey Federation. Payment can be made on the day of the event by cash or check payable to NWTF-NH.

Registrations are being taken on a first-come, first-served basis, and remaining space is limited to six individuals.

- March 26: Raymond Baptist Church, 145 Route 27, Raymond, NH. Class begins at 8:00 a.m. and concludes at 4:00 p.m.

To register visit:

<https://nh-events-web.s3licensing.com/EventAllEvents?Event>

Schoodic and Sebago Ice Fishing Derbies

The late-week thaw made for some slippery conditions on many Maine lakes over the weekend, but that didn't deter the dedicated anglers who participated in two of the state's biggest ice fishing events.

The Schoodic Lake Ice Fishing Derby in Piscataquis County celebrated its 60th anniversary with a strong turnout. The tournament was held on Schoodic Lake, along with Embee-mee, Seboeis and Boyd lakes.

Wayne Meserve of Charleston took home top honors, pulling in a lake trout that weighed 7.86 pounds and measured 27

(News cont. pg 41)

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The Adventures of Me and Joe

by Bob Cram,
(Alias T.J. Coongate)
Medway, ME

At Steep Bank Pool, where the thin trickle of water from Rocky Brook enters the Penobscot River's West Branch, me and Joe were waist deep in the cool current of this fabled landlocked salmon river. We'd made the 50-mile drive from Mooseleuk to spend a few days on the river, a ritual we followed nearly every summer. As the waters warmed in northern Maine and salmonid fishing slacked off everywhere but in the high ponds and small lakes, the West Branch became a draw we just couldn't resist.

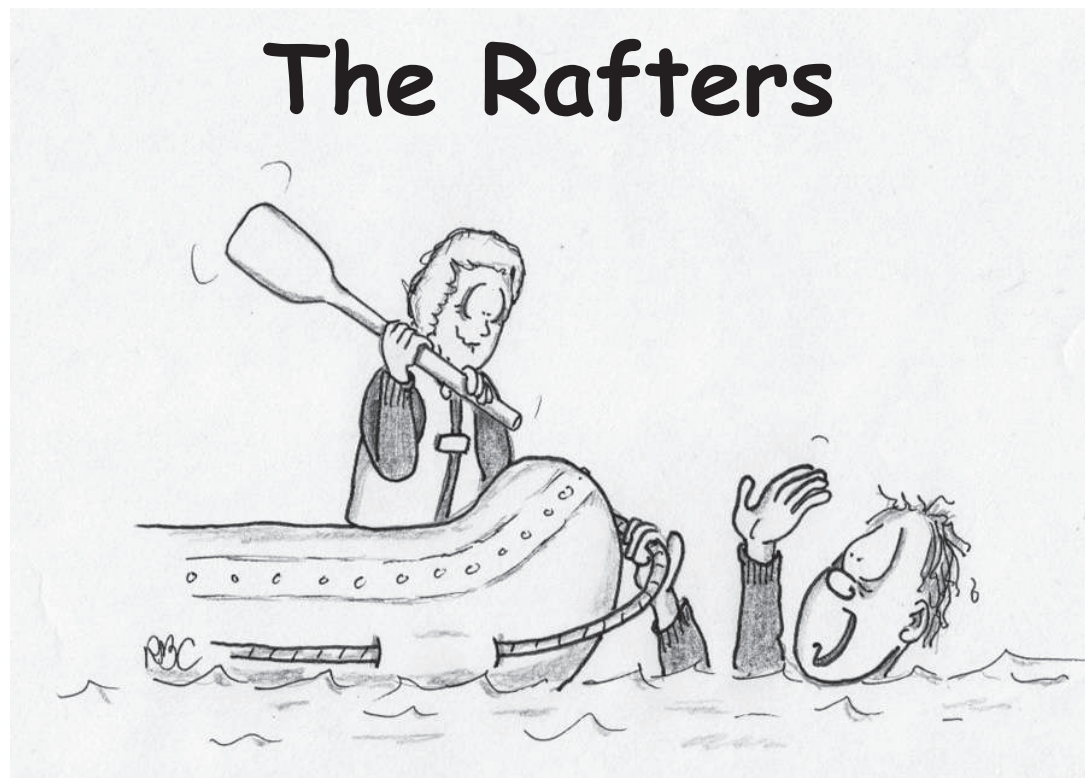
Fed through a long tunnel carved from solid rock originating nearly 50-feet deep behind Ripogenus Dam a mile upstream, the waters of the West Branch remained cool even in the heat of mid-summer. That and the continuous trickle of chum from the smelts that passed through turbine blades at the power station made the

stretch of river between the dam and Ambagejus Lake far downstream one of the most productive salmon and trout fisheries in the northeast.

Normally we fished the northern side of the river. Access was more difficult but competition was so light as to be non-existent. The south shore of the river, bordering the Golden Road, was still not heavily fished, especially when compared to more southerly rivers, but the sight of even one other fisherman on a particular pool would send Joe off into the woods muttering to himself.

This morning, however, as we'd driven by Seep Bank Pool Joe spotted a rise in the river below. With nobody else around, we parked the Jeep and scrambled down the bank to the fish pool.

On the second cast Joe hooked a fat landlocked salmon that busily tail-walked over the broad



"Okay," Joe shouted over the noise of the river downstream. "This here rapid is called The Cribworks. River takes a sharp left down there, then a sharp right. Some really big boulders in this stretch an' some sharp drops.

width of the pool before finally, reluctantly coming to the net. It measured just short of 18-inches and as Joe returned it to the river I glanced upstream.

"Rafts coming," I said.

Joe looked up and scowled. Muttering under his breath he grasped the fly in one hand and the pole in the other and we waded back to shore. Joe knew as well as I did that the rafting companies taking parties down the West Branch brought much-needed money to the rural economy. It was also about

the only way most of these people could intimately enjoy the river.

But each flotilla of rafts that passed through often put down the fish for half an hour or more and for a dedicated fly-fisherman like Joe it was a decidedly unwelcome interruption.

Many of the rafters waved enthusiastically as they passed and Joe gave a half-hearted raise of the hand. The last of the four-raft group had just gone by when we heard a footstep behind us.

"Hey, fellers, how's it

goin'?" The broad cherubic face of Tote Barge beamed at us from the path.

"Be all right, Tote, if they was a few less o' them rafts," Joe replied darkly. He saw a troubled look appear on the other man's face and added quickly, "I know you work for one of them companies Tote, but it delays our fishin' when they go by. You know what I mean?"

"Oh, yeah, I know. But they shore pay good money. All I do is drive the bus an' do odd jobs and I make enough to grubstake

(Me & Joe cont. pg 17)

HELP US FIND

The elusive Northwoods Sporting Journal's moose Marty.

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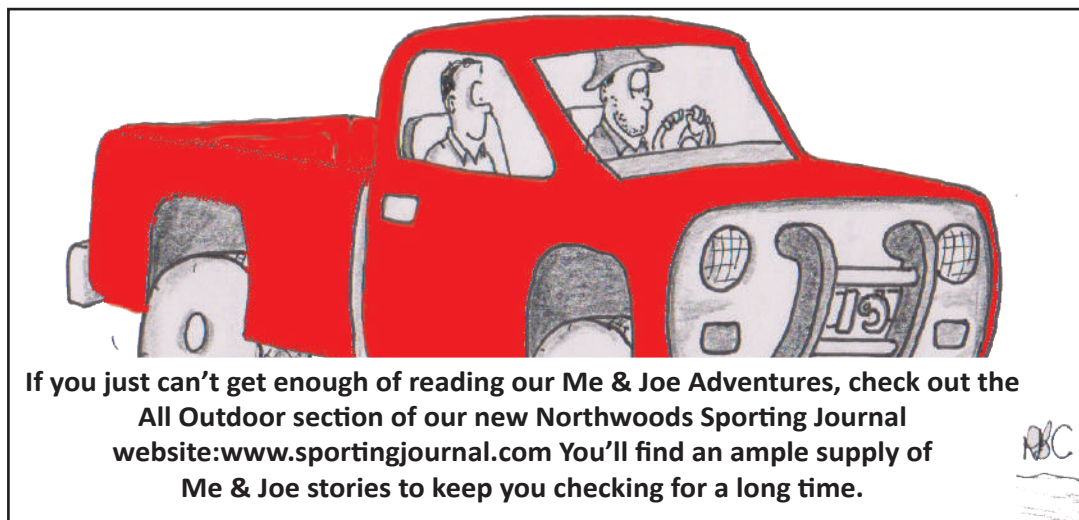
Phone _____

I found Marty on page _____

Joyce Dube

(Marty was found on pg 53)

Entries must be postmarked by 4/11/22 to be eligible for this issue.



If you just can't get enough of reading our Me & Joe Adventures, check out the All Outdoor section of our new Northwoods Sporting Journal website: www.sportingjournal.com You'll find an ample supply of Me & Joe stories to keep you checking for a long time.

Me & Joe

(Cont. from 16)

me for a whole fall an' winter of trappin'."

"So business is good?" I asked, sensing that something was bothering the big woodsman. Tote was tall and broad. Strangers thought he was fat, but most of his bulk was muscle. For many, it was a good thing that he was almost always in fine humor.

Well, it was good," he replied, with a look of concern. "Right up to this mornin'."

"What happened this morning?"

"Say, Joe," Tote said, ignoring my question. "Don't you have a raftin' guide's license?"

Joe looked out over the pool, searching for the telltale rings of a rising salmon. "Yep. Got one a few years back when I thought I'd give 'er a try. Worked about two months over on the upper Kennebec before I decided it weren't for me."

Tote looked down and scuffed a foot. "Ever think o' doin' it again, just temporary, like?"

"Nope. That's a young man's game. Besides, I had enough rough rides and loudmouth passengers to

last me a lifetime. Give me a good canoe any day."

"Well, you see, the thing is..." Tote looked up, an embarrassed flush to his face, "I need a raftin' guide."

Both me and Joe stared at him in open astonishment.

"A guide?" Joe asked unbelievably. "Tote, you work for a raftin' company. They must have a pile of guides."

"Well, they do," he said uncomfortably, "but they're one short today." As Joe started to reply, Tote hurried on. "It'd jist be for today, Joe. Jist fer the afternoon, in fact. One run, an' you'd be done. It pays real good!"

"Tote, I told you, I don't like the work. All I want ter do is wander the shore for a day or two an' fish for salmon. I ain't interested in..."

"If you don't do it, Joe, I'm gonna be fired!"

Joe looked at the big man for a long moment then eased down onto a shore side boulder. "Okay Tote, tell us about it."

"Well, see, there's this guide... his name is Wheeler Abs. The girls call 'im Whee. Got big shoulders on 'im an' one o' them tannin' booth tans. All spring he's been kinda

tauntin' me. Makes fun o' the way I dress an' talk. Always makes sure he's got an audience afore he starts in. Most o' the other guides don't care for 'im but the company needs all the guides.

"Well, this mornin', he found out I trap most o' the rest of the year an' he started criticizin' me in front o' the other guides an' customers. Said I wasn't much of a man, trappin' lil' animals. Said maybe he orta throw paint on me, like some o' them bunny huggers do on furs. I tolt him not to, but he grabbed up a can o' paint they'd been usin' for picnic tables. He give a grin to the girls an' started toward me... Now, you fellers know I'm pretty easy goin', but he kinda got my dander up this mornin'."

Joe nodded. Normally Tote was among the mildest of men, despite his size. "So what'd you do?"

"Well...I...I..." Tote looked sheepish. "I kinda punched on 'im a little."

"You punched on 'im a little," Joe said thoughtfully.

"Yeah, I just was tryin' to make him stop with the paint, but...well...he shouldn'a come for me."

"How bad is it?" I asked.

"Well, he..." Tote scuffed his foot in the gravel. "He's got a few busted ribs..." He looked off upstream. "...an' a broke jaw, an' they think maybe his wrist is broke, but it might not be..." his voice trailed off.

"You get hurt Tote?" Joe asked casually.

Tote immediately lifted his hand. "Yuh, I got this here scratch," he pointed to a faint line on the skin of his broad forearm. "I think it was from his ear ring stud when I got 'im in that headlock."

"But, Tote, I still don't see..."

The big man interrupted hastily. "Most o' the guides cheered. The girls weren't too happy, though. Took to doctorin' 'im like a baby. But the thing is, they can't git another guide up here 'til tomorrow. Mr. Cashly, the manager, was pretty sore. He said if I can't find a guide fer this afternoon, I'm fired."

Joe sighed and slowly shook his head. He looked over at me. I just shrugged in resignation.

A few hours later we were at the raft launching point near Little Eddy on the upper river, surrounded by a whole gaggle of flatlanders dressed in wet suits and life jackets. Joe

was giving his spiel about safety, paddling techniques and where to sit in the raft. A heavysset man with wisps of lank hair combed over his balding pate listened impatiently.

"Yes, yes, we've heard all that," he interrupted. "Now, I've paid good money for this trip and we've been delayed already. When are we getting going?"

"A lot of these people have never been in a raft mister..."

"Strain. Felton Strain. Well I, personally, have rafted some of the larger western rivers. I'm sure this eastern river will prove no great challenge. The only challenge I foresee is to acquire a competent guide for the trip." He lifted his nose at the little group of rafters.

"Don't matter, Mr. Strain," Joe said patiently, "We'll go over the safety rules an' procedures anyway."

Strain sniffed. "Have it your way." He turned on his heal. "I'll be waiting in the raft when you get around to doing your job."

I stared in consternation, waiting for Joe to emulate Tote Barge and punch on him a little. But Joe just shook his head and (Me & Joe cont. pg 22)



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Outdoor Sporting Library



by Jeremiah Wood,
Ashland, ME

Time spent out in the woods seems to develop a stronger connection to the land and enhance our understanding of how things work in nature. The more time spent, the stronger

Anthropologist Richard K. Nelson spent much of his career studying northern peoples and how they survived and interacted with the land. In his early work in the

in the book "Hunters of the Northern Forest: Designs for Survival among the Alaskan Kutchin".

One of the things that struck Nelson in his work was the way people viewed the forest and its inhabitants. This was particularly true of the Koyukon people, who lived hundreds of

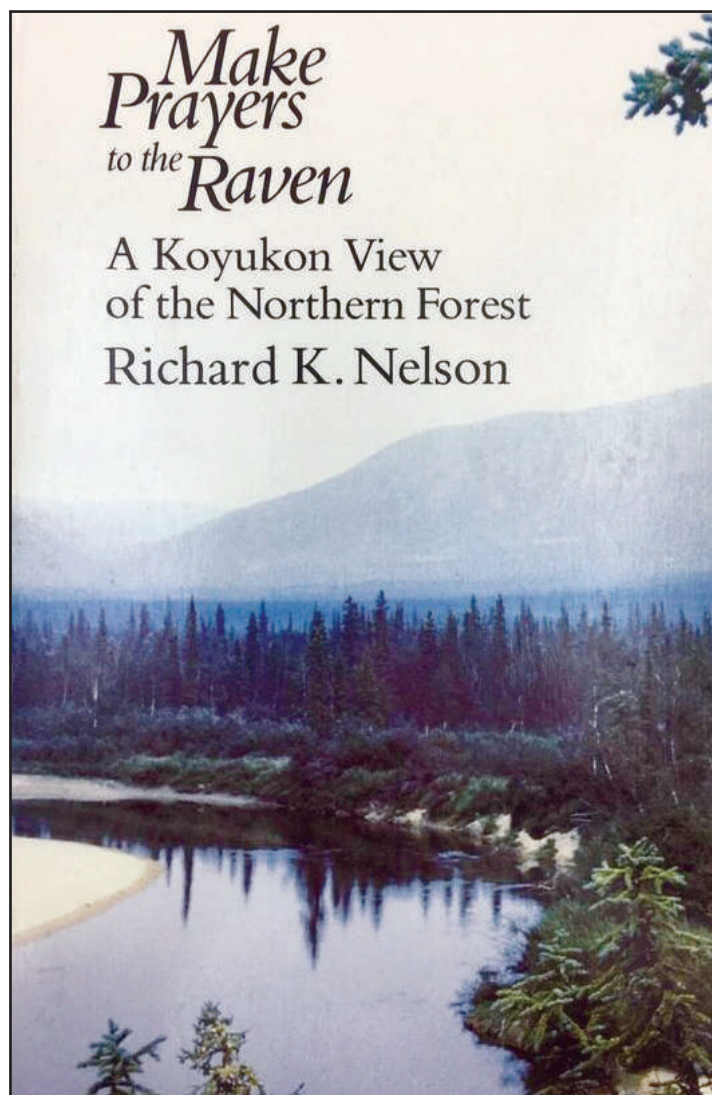
One of the things that struck Nelson in his work was the way people viewed the forest and its inhabitants. This was particularly true of the Koyukon people, who lived hundreds of miles west of the Kutchin in villages along the Koyukuk River.

the connection. But when you depend on the land for survival in a direct way, the connection rises to another level. And if your people have been relying on it for generations, with little influence from the outside world, it shapes the entire culture.

Fort Yukon, Alaska area he studied survival techniques and hunting and gathering methods of the Tranjik Kutchin (now known as the Gwich'in). He lived with these people for a year and developed quite a liking for the way they lived. His work culminated

miles west of the Kutchin in villages along the Koyukuk River. He spent just enough time with these people to realize there was a story to be told. The opportunity to do so came several years later.

When Alaska's vast lands were split into vari-




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ous government and native ownerships following the discovery of oil and the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, there was a need for studies on the subsistence activity of the people affected by these land designations. The National Park Service funded a series of studies to learn where, when and how people used the land, and how these lands impacted the cultural makeup of communities.

In 1976, Nelson began a year long stay in the Koyukuk region, in and around the village of Huslia. He spent much of his time listening to and learning from the elders about their beliefs and attitudes toward different living things in their environment. He soon learned that this was a unique cul- (Raven cont. pg 19)

Raven

(Cont. from pg 18)
ture. Stories that had been passed through the generations governed how most of the people lived, the practices they observed, and the 'taboos' they avoided.

Traditional Koyukon belief holds that every living thing has a spirit and must be treated as such. The way each is treated will bring a person good luck or bad luck. None has such a high status as the raven, who the stories claim is the creator of all things. The distinction between humans and animals is less sharply drawn than in Western culture.

Taboos in the Koyukon belief system included boasting about hunting or trapping exploits, pointing at animals, and keeping wild animals as pets. These are believed to be disrespectful toward animals and will bring the hunter bad luck. Once killed, animals were to be treated a certain way as well. For instance, when furbearers were brought into a house for skinning, their names would not be mentioned, no part of them would be burned, and their carcasses would never be left outdoors overnight.

Disposal of the bones of water animals would be returned to the water, and bones of large land animals would be placed in a dry location well outside of the village. By not following these and dozens of other taboos, a person may be cursed with bad luck in a variety of ways, and the luck might be passed to others.

Cultural belief systems have an interesting way of developing, and can reach a status almost like

that of a religion. This set of beliefs among the Koyukon people had developed through their relationship with nature and how they interpreted their life experiences and consequences of prior actions. What part of this belief system has a firm basis in fact, and which beliefs arose from pure coincidence, or an incomplete understanding of the world? For instance, avoiding boastfulness and pride keeps a person grounded and prevents them from developing an ignorance that would hinder their hunting abilities. Similarly, avoid-


ing waste is certainly a relic of starvation times when waste could have resulted in death. Also, a belief that stealing meat from another hunter exposes one to sickness or death is an effective mechanism for maintaining order in a small community. But what about beliefs like the discovery of a dead bird foretelling death of a child? Or praying to the ice to avoid flooding in spring? Hard to tell.

In his 1983 book "Make Prayers to the Raven: A Koyukon View of the Northern Forest", Richard K. Nelson documented

these and many other beliefs that developed over the centuries in a forest-dwelling culture. He also created a fascinating video series with these people, which can be found on Youtube. He captured stories, traditions and beliefs that have been greatly diminished with the passing of time and the forward march of society even in remote, interior Alaska.

And perhaps more importantly, he provides context for understanding why these unique people feel so strongly about the natural world and its inhabitants.


Jeremiah can be reached at jrodwood@gmail.com You can find his books, "Walter Arnold, Maine Trapper" and "A Fall Fur Hunt in Maine" on Amazon.com




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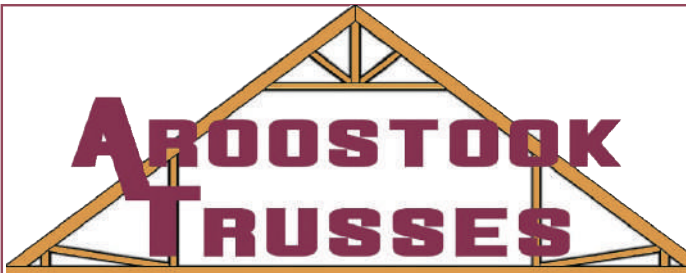


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Aroostook Woods & Water

by Mike Maynard,
Perham, ME

It was just about this same time last year that found me fairly bouncing off the walls in eager anticipation of an opening day spent on the fabled waters of GLS. As for the bouncing thing, I really don't; I just turned 60 and have suddenly noticed that it's harder to tie my left shoe than my right, so any 'bouncing' is purely a rhetorical flourish. The winter

up here hadn't been bad. In truth, it was almost balmy by County standards. But still, I was looking for a merciful end to it all the same, and an opening day trip to GLS would put it to bed. The truck had been packed the night before, the coffee pot programmed for the wee hours of the morning.

I walked out the front door the next morning



Snotty Sojourn At The Stream

at 3 a.m. only to be confronted with a fog so thick I literally could not see my truck parked just 20 yards away. I had to drive over to Mapleton to pick Bob up, and it took damn near an hour to get there! Five mph all the way into Washburn, one wheel on the shoulder

so I'd know I was still on my side of the road. By the time we hit Knowles Corner and cut over towards Houlton it had started to rain. When we made the turn onto Rt.1, it simply got worse. Adjectives for this amount of water falling from the sky have yet to be

thought up; trotting out the old saw about it 'pouring cats and dogs' wouldn't do justice to the event, but it's all I got.

When we finally pulled into the parking lot by the dam, it was about 7:30 a.m.; ...and still raining. A lot. I've been to opening days at GLS when you had to climb up and over snowbanks and slide down to the water on your fanny. Not last year. Last year you just stood there at the edge of the parking lot and let water and gravity sort of ooze you down the hill. As we sat there in the truck, looking out at the monsoon, we wondered just how in the hell were we supposed to get undressed and suited up. We couldn't very well get out (Stream cont. pg 21)

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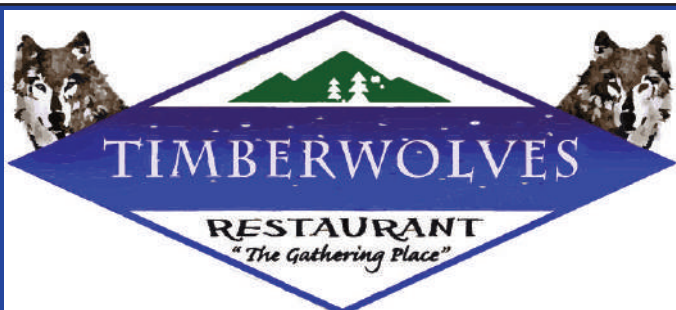
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Stream

(Cont. from pg 20)

of the truck, strip off our driving clothes and crawl into a dry pair of waders when for all intents and purposes we were already under water.

Currently I'm driving an F-150, plenty roomy enough, all things consid-

Adjectives for this amount of water falling from the sky have yet to be thought up; trotting out the old saw about it 'pouring cats and dogs' wouldn't do justice to the event, but it's all I got.

ered, but I'm not petite; I measure up as 6'3" and weigh in at a svelte 19 stone (I'm not telling you what that translates into pounds as). There simply isn't the room to maneuver all my parts and pieces. I'm not that limber anymore. I tried, but even reviving all the old Saturday night drive-in movie contortions we used to do so well, but all I got out of it this time was a pulled hammy. I needed one of those 8x8 pop-up awnings. I have one, it just never occurred to me that I might need it to go fishing. An umbrella? I don't even own one.

Bob was smarter than me, he took one look at the rain outside, took one look around at the room we had to work with, and called it a day right there on the spot. It turned out to be an exercise in futility; jump out, rip off my shirt, jump back in and towel off. Jump

back out and put a wool sweater on, jump back in and towel off. Do you see a theme here? I only brought the one towel, and the poor thing never stood a chance that day. I tried to put my wading mat down so I'd have something to stand on, but it immediately turned into the world's biggest amadou patch. The backing is old and cracked and I watched in horror as the water bubbled up through the ancient material. And still the rain continued to fall. When I finally got dressed, I was soaked to the bone; the waders were irrelevant. I was cold, wet, squishy, and I hadn't even strung my rod up yet.

I had expected a crowd, but everybody else was smarter than us and stayed home to man the sump pumps; we only three other anglers all morning. I only threw a couple of patterns all morning; it was enough to just be standing

in hallowed waters again and working out the kinks after a long winter. We never even saw anybody get so much as a bump. And then there was the 20 minutes or so that I spent throwing a flyless tippet. Cold, wet, numb fingers don't tie good knots. I had set the hook on a bump, only to blow the hook set. In my defense, the rain was jackhammering into my brain, I was wet and cold; but I still felt like an idiot. At least the Pine Tree store was warm. We got a cup of coffee and a muffin, bought a couple of flies, and turned for home.

I'll go to GLS again this season, too, but this time I might actually pay attention to what the weatherman tells me. Maybe...

Mike Maynard is buried in snow and ice in the woods of Perham, Maine. He can be reached at perhamtrout@gmail.com

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Me & Joe

(Cont. from pg 17)

continued with his indoctrination. As the rest of the clients headed toward the raft after the talk was over, Joe muttered to me from the side of his mouth.

"See why I give up raft guidin'? Too many jokers like him!"

"Oh, Mr. Guide?"

Joe turned at the sound of a slightly tremulous voice. A little old lady with shining white hair and a hesitant smile stood there. Beside her was a wizened old man with a bald head and friendly blue eyes.

"You didn't give us any paddles," the little old woman said.

"Well, ma'am, I thought maybe paddlin' might be too much for you." Joe returned her smile. It was hard not to.

"Oh, nonsense," she said quickly. "Abraham and I have done this sort of thing before. This trip is for our 50th wedding anniversary and we want to experience everything, don't we Abraham."

Her husband nodded agreement. "That we do, Sarah. We'd feel like excess baggage if you didn't let us paddle a bit."

Joe relented and handed each of them one of the short plastic paddles used in rafting. As they turned away he asked, "Where did you go rafting before?"

"On the Dead River," Sarah said over her shoulder. "We've run it five times now."

I watched Joe's mouth drop open.

"The Dead," I mused. "Isn't that over by the Kennebec?"

Joe nodded. "Runs into the Kennebec. It's one of the worst rivers to run in the northeast. I've run it twice. I don't want to run it again."

We shoved off and Joe guided the cumbersome rafter through the first short rapids below the launching area. At the sharp bend above the Telos Road Bridge we pulled the raft to shore.

"Okay," Joe shouted over the noise of the river downstream. "This here

rapid is called The Cribworks. River takes a sharp left down there, then a sharp right. Some really big boulders in this stretch an' some sharp drops. Since most o' you aren't real experienced, I'd prefer you hook up a safety line."

As the other rafters reached for the lines, Felton Strain shook his head in disdain. "I don't really think I'll need to be tied in. Safety lines are for babies."

Sarah looked at Strain with a mild gaze as she hooked up her own safety line.

"Why thank you Mr. Strain. I haven't been called that young in ages. You know," she looked around for her paddle, "It isn't just to keep you in the boat, these lines." She looked up

and smiled sweetly. "It's to help them find the bodies."

Felton Strain stared as the raft lurched out from shore and was immediately borne downstream by the savage current. At the first turn the raft heaved over a huge underwater boulder and, as the rafters paddles wildly, it lurched into the turn. Over the roar of the water I could hear some of the passengers screaming. Looking back, I saw Joe bear down grimly with his stern paddle and the raft slid around another corner.

In front, Felton Strain stared at the seething water, his fingers digging into the fabric of the raft. Suddenly, the bottom seemed to drop from beneath us as we plunged over a steep fall. Almost in slow motion, Strain stated to fall overboard.

Joe stumbled by me in an instant. One of his hands latched onto a guide rope, the other snagged Felton Strain by the collar. With a terrific jerk, Joe sent him tumbling into the bottom of the raft. Seconds later the craft slid sideways into the calmer water of Big Eddy.

"Everybody all

(Me & Joe cont. pg 23)

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Me & Joe

(Cont. from pg 22)

right?" Joe asked. Most everyone nodded their heads, most exhilarated by the wild ride.

"You see why we like to have folks wear a safety line, Mr. Strain?"

Wet to the ears, Strain staggered upright and lurched back to the front of the raft.

"Nonsense," he stut-tered, his face pasty. "I sim-ply lost my footing. I'll be fine for the rest of the trip."

Joe stared at him for a long moment then went back to the stern. "We have some fairly calm water for a ways before we come to Big A Rapid," he told the passengers. "Let's relax an' enjoy the scenery."

Most of the rafters were fascinated by the passing wooded shores, the immense granite boulders

that littered the shoreline and the depths of the river, as well as drifting ducks that seemed to view the raft as a fellow traveler. In the bow, however, Felton Strain ignored the view and muttered darkly to anyone who would listen.

"Just a bunch of trees and rocks. A lot better on the Yellowstone. I don't think we're getting our money's worth, if you ask me." Some of the other passengers shifted uncomfortably and glanced at one another.

As we swung around the left hand turn into the Big A Rapid, everyone except Strain began to paddle hard. All went well through most of the quick water. But as the raft took the sharp turn at the foot of the reach the bow hit an underwater ridge and heaved into the air. Before anyone could react, Felton Strain

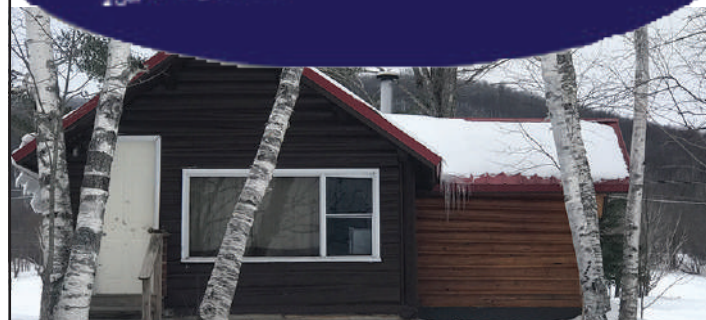
was thrown out into the foaming current.

Joe glanced at me with a silent plea then heaved himself over the side after the other man. I dug in with my paddle, shouting at the other passengers to do the same. Somehow,

we made it into the calmer water downstream without overturning.

I looked back to see Joe swimming toward us, the limp figure of Felton Strain in tow. We helped both of them over the side (Me & Joe cont. pg 30)

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"Just Fishing"

by Bob Leeman,
Bangor, ME

The Pine Tree Store in Grand Lake Stream, Maine is a Maine landmark if there ever was one! Originally constructed by woodsman, Paul Hoar, in the early 20th century, the "original" still does a

along the west side of the stream, used to be quite a noisy place on Saturday nights, in those early years.

The State run fish hatchery, in its inception, was also an early year entry as well, raising and stock-

ing sports, hearing of the fantastic angling at this site, would emanate to this source of "fantastic rewards"—and could even hire local guides for assistance in their endeavors.

Rose's Lodge and Cabins was one, if only the first lodging available. Over the years, there were many more offering visitor

One of the memorable and inviting features at the Pine Tree Store has been the "Liar's Bench", where occupants and patrons would share their prior days "in the field" tales, along with quips and tales of guiding visiting sports, while sharing their morning coffee.

profitable business today. Hoar, who constructed and ran the business himself in those trying years, found a perfect location for the establishment, right at the intersection of Water Street and Princeton Road.

For several years, it filled the needs of local folk and many loggers and woodsmen doing "labors" in those days. Some say, the "Tough End Street" located

ing young landlocked salmon. It was located on a site just opposite to the "rough" crowd "downtown" area, on Water Street, or the Big Lake Road as locals often call it.

In those very early days, entry into the local town was by horse and buggy from Princeton, ME, about eleven miles away along Route #1.

In a nutshell, fish-

accommodations. At that time in local history, most of the "guests" preferred to angle for an abundant population of smallmouth bass in several local waters such as West Grand Lake, Big Lake, and the St. Croix River, for the most part. Believe it or not, only a handful of locals fly fished for the landlocked salmon in the nearby stream. It wasn't until the late 1970's

The Pine Tree Store



Once store owners, Curt and Kathy Cressey get credit for this front door display.

and 1980's that salmon attracted anglers who actually began to crowd into shores of the clear, pristine, inviting waters of Grand Lake Stream.

That was the real beginnings of the boom years in fly fishing activity. But we digress...

Paul Hoar sold the store to his daughter, Barbara and her husband, Ken

(Store cont. pg 29)

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Wet-Lining Ponds

While I learned to fly fish on streams in the White Mountains region of New Hampshire, I honed my skills on ponds in Maine. When I started fishing Maine in the early 1980s, while we fished rivers and streams, they took a backseat to the wild native brook trout ponds I found so unique and fascinating.

There are a few self-sustaining brook trout ponds in New Hampshire today, but two of the three current Wild Trout Management ponds were being stocked at the time. The third was a shallow remote water with what was a marginal fishery at best. I knew of only one wild brook trout pond in Vermont, and my then home state of Massachusetts had none.

From a reliability standpoint, ponds are notably more temperamental than rivers and streams. Wind and bright sun can shut them down, and I believe pond fish are more affected by barometer changes than river and stream fish. While I can almost always catch fish in rivers and streams, except in high flows, ponds can and do shut down hard.

While river and stream fish can be quite finicky, especially when heavily pressured, and currents add a whole new dimension to fly fishing difficulty, in some ways fishing a pond is tougher than fishing moving water. Sure, it can be relatively easy when insects are on the surface and brookies are eagerly feeding, but this is the exception not the rule.

When pond fish won't come to you, you need to go to them, and this means

wet-lining. While some believe otherwise, wet-lining is not as easy as it looks. For starters, long casts are important as it allows you to cover water. Many of today's fly fishers can't cast well due to too much time watching an indicator, or worse, Euro nymphing where there is no casting at all.

When it comes to pond fishing, nothing sep-

as Jack Foote and Tom Winslow, and strangers alike, outfish me three-to-one when wet-lining. But, once in a while, I am fortunate to be that guy. Part of what makes me a less than great wet-liner is that I just don't enjoy it that much, and when it's not working, I let take my foot off the gas.

Wet-lining is a game of patience and the more

When pond fish won't come to you, you need to go to them, and this means wet-lining. While some believe otherwise, wet-lining is not as easy as it looks. For starters, long casts are important as it allows you to cover water.

arates the good from the bad and the great from the good like wet-lining. The difference between a good wet-liner and a bad one is notable, and the difference between a great wet-liner and a good wet-liner even more so. I consider myself a good wet-liner, but not a great one.

If you doubt for a minute that pond wet-lining is a skill as worthy of praise as dry fly fishing, anchor next to a skilled wet-liner some day and compare notes. While I typically have some level of success when the conditions dictate that I go down to find brook trout in a pond, I'm rarely as successful as I'd like to be.

I've had friends such

patient you are the more successful you'll be. It's all about keeping your fly in the water, and inching it along far slower than most are capable of doing. Great wet-liners can do this for hours on end, good wet-liners give up after an hour or so, and bad wet-liners are done after just a few unsuccessful retrieves.

The other skill needed to be a great wet-liner is strike detection. While you sometimes get obvious hits and easily detectable bites, most takes when wet-lining are barely noticeable. Instead, they are usually nothing more than a slight resistance mid retrieve. Fail to respond to these subtleties and the fish will reject your fly without you

Native Fish Talk

by Bob Mallard,
Skowhegan, ME



ever knowing.

Any resistance while wet-lining, no matter how minor it may seem, must be met with an immediate and hard set. More often than not it's not a fish, and you must stop and restart your retrieve. Sometimes

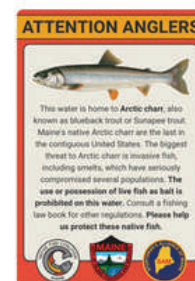
ting when others are not is something you can be proud of and grateful for.

BOB MALLARD has fly fished for forty years. He is the former owner of Kennebec River Outfitters, a Registered Maine Fishing Guide, and a commercial fly designer. Bob is a blogger, writer, and author. He is also a native fish advocate and founding member, Executive Director, and Maine Board Member for Native Fish Coalition. Look for his books *50 Best Places Fly Fishing the Northeast*, *25 Best Towns Fly Fishing for Trout*, *Squaretail: The Definitive Guide to Brook Trout and Where to Find The and Favorite Flies for Maine: 50 Essential Patterns from Local Experts*. Bob can be reached at www.BobMallard.com or info@bobmallard.com

Subscriber Notice:

Please be advised that the late deliveries of the issues of the Northwoods Sporting Journal are the responsibility of the United States Postal Service, which reportedly has experienced slowdowns attributable to Covid, weather conditions, and other supply factors. We regret this situation and remind all subscribers that a full digital edition of the February issue can be seen at www.sportingjournal.com Click on "issues."

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Ramblings From T8-R9

by Benjamin Rioux,
Millinocket Lake

Ice cutting at Libby Camps is a time-honored tradition dating back to the first ice house in 1890 when the camps were founded. Born out of necessity due to the remote location of the camps, the ice house was perhaps the

hangs on the front porch of the main lodge today. Re-supplying the camps was difficult in those days, and those winter months were often used to stock up on things such as flour, barrels of cured meats, and grain for the summer cow using

When Matt and Ellen were in college, they decided to buy Matt's mother Elsie out and had their first solo ice cutting in 1977 with the help of family and their college buddies.

most important single element in the camps during those early days; acting as refrigeration for all things perishable in between those long journey's back to town. Back then we used an old hand saw, which still

a team of horses that would haul a sled into camp via an old tote road. The camps were on an island then, and a two-day trip up the river in the summer if the water pitch allowed for travel.

Libby's stopped hav-

ing an ice house when Matt Senior's father Allie Libby died in 1959, but began again in 1968 with the advent of the snowmobile and a road within a few miles of camp. Matt was 13 when ice cutting started again and explains that they had to learn how to do it all over again. "We had an old EZ-6 Homelite chainsaw that weighed about 25 pounds and we would cut near the middle of March. We ended up cutting for days to get a small amount of ice since it was too thick at that time of year to cut all the way through (sometimes up to 4 feet). A few years later we started cutting in January before all the snow came and the ice was easier to handle and was a better quality."

When Matt and Ellen



The ice hole. (Photo by Ben Rioux)

were in college, they decided to buy Matt's mother Elsie out and had their first solo ice cutting in 1977 with the help of family and their college buddies. Ironically the best saw we have today is a Husqvarna chainsaw Matt bought in 1980. It is made of tough materials and can take the water hitting the engine at

temperatures sometimes hovering well below 0. We also now attach an Alaskan saw mill to the blade making it easier to cut square blocks and making it easier to operate with two men.

While having an ice house today is more of a nod to our storied past than a necessity, we still hold our annual ice cutting event every January to kick off the opening weekend of our winter season. Each year we gather the troops, which typically consists of a rag-tag group of guides and a wonderful group of volunteers, and cut between 450 and 550 blocks of ice weighing on average 80 to 100lbs. Blocks are cut, cleaned up, and hauled to the ice house near the lodge by snowmobile, where they are stacked high and packed with a gracious amount of sawdust so that they will last through the hot summer months.

There are always three or four blocks left over from the previous year that we haul out and put on display as a testament to just how well this insulating method works! Throughout the spring, summer, and

(Ice cont. pg 27)



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Letters

(Cont. from pg 8)

the one that killed the deer. Also in the attached photos.

The photos and story are probably too “gruesome” for your reading public, but then again, it’s part of nature and nature is not always kind and gentle.

Hope you enjoy it.

**David Minton
Warner, NH**

Kids and Motorboats

To the Editor:

Thank you for your article “Kids and Motorboats.”

Another erosion of freedoms in a mostly free society.

What about the use of an outboard on a small boat? Electric outboard? Will children need mandatory canoe or sailing lessons soon?

I was driving tractors on the country roads at 12 and using the forklift to load round bales onto the flatbed. The Dept of Ag. was recently trying to outlaw children doing work on farms. Nuts.

**Chris Woodhead
Upper Marlborough,
MD**

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Ice

(Cont. from pg 26)

fall seasons, we take these crystal-clear blocks of ice out one by one, clean them thoroughly, and distribute them to the YETI coolers that we leave on the front porch of each quest cabin, making it available for your personal use.

So the next time you pour a cocktail over ice on the front porch of your cabin, know that the history of Libby Camps is all around you – even in your glass!

A great snowfall year has us looking forward to spring fishing, and Libby Camps still has a few select spring dates left for 2022. Call 207-435-8274 for more information, or to book your spring fishing adventure today!



Ben is an avid fly fisherman, registered Maine Guide, and the Marketing director for Libby Sporting Camps. When he's not exploring T8-R9 in search of new water, he can be reached at ben@libbycamps.com



**Steve Smith in
the ice shed.**
(Photo by Ben Rioux)

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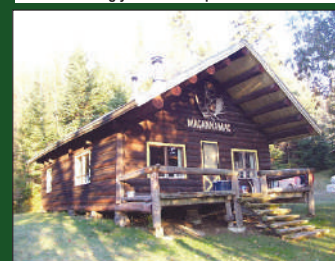
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Wildlife Agencies Get Record Funding

By Cassie Ferri

The U.S. Department of the Interior will distribute a record \$1.5 billion in Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration program funding to state wildlife agencies this fiscal year.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Wildlife

life Restoration program support hunter education and recruitment, while the majority provide grants to state fish and wildlife agencies to develop projects that conserve and manage wild birds and mammals.

"State wildlife agencies dedicate WSFR funds

Fish Restoration program funding is allocated to each state fish and wildlife agency based on the respective state's land and water area and the population of hunting and fishing license holders. Once these funds are allocated, state agencies submit individual

Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration program funding is allocated to each state fish and wildlife agency based on the respective state's land and water area and the population of hunting and fishing license holders.

and Sport Fish Restoration program distributes funds from excise taxes on firearms and ammunition, archery bows and arrows, fishing equipment, and boat fuel to all 50 U.S. states and territories. The WSFR is made up of two program areas—the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund and the Wildlife Restoration program. Some funds in the Wild-

life Restoration program support a variety of conservation projects and programs such as hunting and fishing education, fish and wildlife management, scientific research, habitat restoration and protection, land and water rights acquisition, and hunting and boating access," said Martha Williams, USFWS principal duty director in a press release.

Wildlife and Sport

grant proposals for USFWS approval, with each proposal detailing how the WSFR money will be used for an agency's project. The program's appropriations typically cover up to 75% of state wildlife agency project costs, with each state supplementing the federal allotments with state hunting and fishing license revenues or funds from partner organizations.



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Maine gets \$12,196,256--broken down this is \$9,945,260.00 for wildlife conservation programs and \$2,250,996.00 for hunter education and outreach. The reason for the upgrade in funding is because hunters and anglers are continuing to purchase equipment and licenses, as well as invest more time and money on their hobbies than ever before. All of this funding going back into wildlife is thanks to outdoorsmen and women!

Cassie Ferri is a senior at the University of Maine majoring in wildlife ecology.

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Store

(Cont. from pg 24)

Wheaton, who eventually sold the store to Bob and Bonnie Gagnon. Bonnie Gagnon was a "wit" to be sure, and she made the morning coffee something to behold. One morning, she did a tap-dance for "the boys", tap shoes, skirt and all, to be enjoyed by all in attendance.

Following the Gagnons, in order of ownership were Curt and Kathy Cressey, remembered for their basket-making business in the store, moose tagging, and over-all friendliness. Laura Farrell was the next owner for a year or so, then she sold to the current owners, Leslie Severance and Brinda Leighton, who now offer expanded services, all for the convenience of locals and transients.

One of the memorable and inviting features at the Pine Tree Store has been the "Liar's Bench", where occupants and patrons would share their prior days "in the field" tales, along with quips and tales of guiding visiting sports, while sharing their morning coffee. If you have never been privy to one of these sessions, you have missed something in your life.

"The Bench" was a waiting place for guides mostly, and just to be present during these sessions from about 7 to 8 a.m., before the guides would line up with their trailered motored canoes for a day's work, was something to be treasured. And, who could forget the Guide-of-Guides, Veteran Guide Val Moore of Grand Lake Stream. Val was a main-

stay on the Liar's Bench. "How's the fishin'?" somebody would ask. Val would respond with "Hellish!" every time. The same answer to queries as to guiding, weather, a modicum of clients, and on and on... All aside, Master Moore was a real credit to the trade and, was perhaps, one of the most sought-after by visiting sports.

Moore's bass fishing preference, seemed to be his secretive locations at the St. Croix River, mostly. But he also seated his client or clients to other local hot spots in his Grand Laker canoe and ten horse Evinrude motor.

Today, the Liar's Bench is still in place-but is pulled up to a serving table, where diners may relax and enjoy their food-service meals. A lunch counter and stools front a kitchen, complete with chef and hot plate, refrigerator and oven for mini-meals and pizza.

Over these many

memorable years spent at Grand Lake Stream, a sundry of fishing guides became available to patrons. Some say that at one time more than one hundred-fifty local guides "filled the bill"---all decked out mostly with locally constructed Grand Laker canoes and equipped with outboard motors. Hard to imagine!

But that's another story.



Bob Leeman is a Master Maine Guide, outdoor writer, naturalist, book author, and a co-host of the MAINE OUTDOORS radio program on Sunday evenings from 7-8 p.m. His three books---"Fly Fishing Maine Rivers, Brooks and Streams", "Trolling Flies for Trout and Salmon", and "Salesman Angler"---are all available, in soft cover only, at several bookstores and fly shops, or directly from him. For information, see ad in this publication or call 207-573-1468.



Davyn Reynolds, 10, of Liverpool, NY snagged this handsome Splake at Seboeis Lake during the Schoodic Lake Fishing Derby. His first ice fishing experience. (Photo by Scott Reynolds)

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Me & Joe

(Cont. from pg 23)

where they lay, gasping, on the bottom of the raft. Joe sat up slowly, then reached over and attached a safety line to Strain's waist.

The other man sat up. "Take this thing off me immediately!" he demanded, spitting out water.

"If that line comes off, we set you ashore and you can find your own way back," Joe said evenly. Strain stared at the tangle of trees and brush along the shore.

"Hurumph!" he said, and lurched toward the bow, where he sat with arms folded. "The company shall hear about this!" he growled. "I'll see to it that this is your last rafting

trip on this river."

"You can bet on it," Joe said sourly, turning back to his paddle.

We drifted through Nesowadnehunk Deadwater without mishap. As the river began to narrow and quicken, Sarah got out her waterproof camera and began to snap pictures. Seeing this, Strain got up to sit backward on the bow of the raft.

"Take my picture," he demanded. Take my picture with the river in the background."

"Get back down in the raft, Mr. Strain," Joe said loudly. "We're coming to the falls."

"I'll get down as soon as she takes my picture!" Strain said indignantly. Sarah turned to smile back at us and Joe shrugged. At

that moment we slid over the falls.

Nesowadnehunk Falls isn't particularly steep or high, but it is a sudden drop for a raft. Everyone screamed as Felton Strain tumbled backward into the river. The raft slid around the corner toward the mouth of Nesowadnehunk Stream and we all watched as Strain popped up downstream at the end of his safety line.

As the river calmed, Felton Strain began to pull himself back along the line hand over hand until he was at the front of the raft. Hanging onto the guide rope around the front he held up the other hand. "Help me back in!" he demanded.

Sarah moved up to smile down at him sweetly.

Then she raised her paddle and rapped him sharply on the knuckles. Strain let out a yelp, lost his hold, and was pulled back downstream where he was once again snubbed by the safety line.

Sarah looked back at Joe apologetically. "I'm so sorry," she said, "but I think we've all had enough of that nasty man. I'm sure the rest of the trip will be much more enjoyable if he stays out there where he seems determined to wind up anyway."

Joe grinned, solely. "Well now, ma'am, I guess I can't argue with that. Besides, the rest of the trip is mostly calm water anyway."

I leaned over and whispered to Joe. "What about Pockwockamus Rap-

id just above the takeout?"

"Well, you got to admit," Joe said, turning his paddle to steer around a rock. "That ain't much of a rapid. Jist enough rocks to punch ol' Felton a little. I figure by the time we beach this raft he'll be in about the same shape as that guide, Wheeler Abs."

I looked at the head bobbing downstream where the sound of cursing and threats could just be heard over the noise of the river. "But what about you?" I asked.

"Me?" Joe grinned slowly, trailing his paddle in the water. Why, I guess I'm jist lookin' forward to getting' fired!"



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West Grand Lake: Bigger Fish

Suddenly, with the approach of April, the idea of dragging some feathers behind a canoe doesn't seem so foreign as it did only a few weeks ago. Ice out in these downeast lakes can be expected by the third week of April, sometimes much sooner. But even before that, we see hearty salmon anglers taking their turn in one of the classic pools on Grand Lake Stream, and this whets our appetite for lake fishing.

Those who brave the first open water fishing opportunities often do so wearing as many layers as they did the previous month while ice fishing. Not much has changed except the surface of the lake. In fact, trolling in the wind and the rain when it's 39 degrees, feels substantially colder than standing in the March sun on a windless, frozen lake covered with snow. But the rewards can be just as great.

We tend not to get that many high pressure, "bluebird" days at the start of the open water season. Unstable, ever-changing, tumultuous weather is much more the rule of the day. And luckily, that's salmon and togue weather. Flat calm under a cloudless, blue sky is a good bass fishing day, and that will



There are indications that game fish at West Grand Lake are breaking through the size barrier.
(Photo by Diane Reynolds)

begin soon enough. But for those souls who still have winter in their veins and know how to hang onto it in spring, late April and early May is for you.

Over the past three years, we have begun to see a change in the quality of the fishing in West Grand Lake and in other area fisheries. To be clear, it was never anything less than good. But then, beginning before the start of the pandemic, we began to see increases in the size of our landlocked salmon and togue. For many, many years, the "run of fish" for salmon seemed locked into the 16-20 inch bracket,

which is by no means anything to thumb a nose at. That three-year old landlocked salmon is as beautiful a specimen as any fish from either fresh or salt water.

But then, reports began to come from guides to Greg Burr, senior Region C fisheries biologist, that anglers were bursting through the upper limits of that bracket.

Two-footers were being landed in the stream more frequently than they had been. Twenty-two and twenty-three inch salmon were being taken in West Grand Lake on flies, stick baits, smelts, and on jigs through the ice.

Meanwhile, after a long period of trial and error and changing regulations on togue fishing, that bracket broke too. In the same time period as good things were happening for salmon, larger, heavier togue were being seen more and more often. Double digit weights did happen before, but not with much consistency.



The Singing Maine Guide

by Randy Spencer,
Grand Lake Stream, ME

Any survey of early season togue in the last few years will reveal numbers of these hefty lake trout, including one taken last spring out of Grand Lake

ready to make any great pronouncements, it was clear that he knew about the signs we're seeing.

One possible contributor to the larger size game

Over the past three years, we have begun to see a change in the quality of the fishing in West Grand Lake and in other area fisheries.

Lodge that weighed over 19 lbs.

When I related these unscientific findings based on guiding fishermen all season, and on reports from other guides and sports to Greg Burr, he said, "We're going to do everything we can to try to keep that going." So, while he wasn't

fish we're seeing now could be the introduction of "jack smelts" to West Grand Lake in the 1990's. Traditionally, this was a body of water populated chiefly by American Rainbow Smelt of the "pin smelt" variety. They're still there, and can be found winter and summer. (Fish cont. pg 41)



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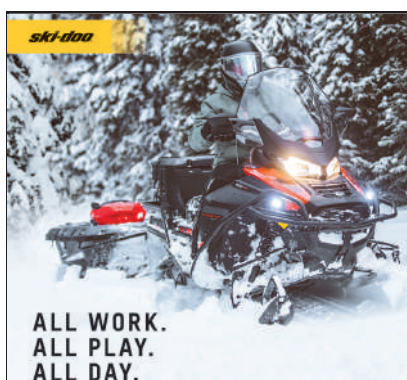
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417 Thorndike Rd.,
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The Buck Hunter

by Hal Blood,
Moose River, ME



As I write this in late February, old man winter still has its grip on northern Maine. We still haven't seen a normal amount of snow, but the temperatures have been seasonably cold. There were a couple of quick warm-ups, which settled the snow down to where it is still not a

them in the past. From the time I moved to the area in 1991, the coyotes have been devastating to the deer in the winter, so it's great to see the deer recovering from it. With luck the deer will start creating new yards where they can winter away from town like they once did.

In this area, I wondered what could have happened to all the bucks that were in the area the previous year. I was puzzled about this throughout the season.

hinderance to the deer. I measured the snow behind my house on February 20th. In the open there was about 24" and under the green growth, there was about 12". It was firmed up with some crust in it but not bad enough to bother the deer very much. The coyote crew around Jackman has killed 23 of them at this point and it is getting hard to find many coyote tracks anymore. This has allowed the deer to roam around and feed in areas where the coyotes would have killed

There is always something to learn every day you step into the deer woods. When teaching my deer clinics or when talking with hunters at the lodge or a sportsman show, I often get asked if I ever learn anything new about deer? my answer is always that I try to learn something new every time I go into the woods. I read a quote a long time ago that was something to the effect that: "once you are done learning, you are done". Every day I spend in the wood's

deer hunting, or just in the woods in general, I am always studying things, and trying to figure out why certain things are the way they are. Of course, while deer hunting, I'm focused on deer and the sign they leave, but I am always studying what else is going on the woods. I find that sometimes find that other sign I find might connect back to deer.

Last deer season was one of very little snow, so I found myself wandering the woods in search of buck more than looking for a track to follow. I spent a lot of time checking signpost rubs that I knew of as well

as widening my search for more in those areas. During the season while doing this, I came to a conclusion that I had not thought about or realized before. I spent a lot of times in two separate areas, both early season and late season after the snow fell. In one area every signpost rub had been worked over by bucks

when I checked them the first week of the season. In the other area, there were very few signposts that had been rubbed. In this area, I wondered what could have happened to all the bucks that were in the area the

This area was made up of high ridges and mountains. That first day on snow, I spent the day checking every signpost for miles on end and although I found a few smaller buck tracks, I never did find one the track of a big old buck. I was puzzled to say the least as the rut was on and the bucks were roaming day and night. The other signpost area is in more low ground where the snow didn't come until after Thanksgiving. I decided to give that area a try during the muzzle loader season. The first day there, I found where two big bucks had fought and followed one all



day. During that day, I also crossed a couple more big tracks. I went back the next day and headed toward the signposts in a different direction. As soon as I got into the areas where there were signposts, I picked up a big track. That buck I came close to getting as I gave him a haircut as he (Learning cont. pg 48)



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Home Defense Guns

In no way do I support a retreat on the battles we fight to continue to own and use modern sporting rifles. Neither do I support any form of gun rights limitations. I do, however, recognize the facts that, we as a society continue to elect

very serviceable hunting guns. I would, however, think twice about using a .357 on big game. I know many folks do it, but this caliber is on the low end of the energy required for big game animals. The other advantage these rifles offer

a magazine fed action. Henry also offers models with drop tube loadings. Winchester and Marlin and Henry offer rifles with loading gates for magazine tubes under the barrels. Most of these rifles also offer optic mounting capabilities. There are even

This article simply offers an alternative rifle action to provide for and protect your family. At least until those same politicians figure it out.

tactical style lever actions available. I am sure these will soon be regulated because they look tactical.

A stroll through any gun shop that carries used guns will always have a few lever actions for sale. In general, the lever guns are available in common easier to find, calibers like .30/30, the most common. .35 Remington is very popular in Maine and .45/70 for any task you may have. My personal lever actions are in .45 Colt, .32 Win. Special, .450 Marlin, .308, and .300 Savage. I am sure there will be more to follow me home going forward. A lever action rifle can be very fast to cycle and fire. I would encourage anyone to watch a cowboy action video to see how quickly these guns can be shot. This of course requires lots of practice. A semiauto rifle is still a bit easier to load and shoot from a functional perspective, while a lever gun is more functionally reliable and less ammunition sensitive. There is a sense of nostalgia experienced while shooting a lever action rifle. It is also a lot of fun. So, as we vote for those politicians falsely promising to wipe out student loan debt,

experience it now because it will be prohibited by the time they are adults.

Tom is a Registered Maine Guide. He is the owner/operator of Shamrock Outfitters in Orient Maine with his wife Ellie. He is a retired police officer as well as a retired manager from two major firearms manufacturers. He is an NRA Certified Instructor as well as a Hunter Safety Instructor in Maine, New Hampshire and Massachusetts. You can reach Tom at Shamrock Outfitters (207) 694-2473. Please visit our Facebook Page: Shamrock Outfitters and Properties and come visit us on East Grand Lake.

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For home defense, lever action rifles are a good alternative to a handgun.
(Photo by Tom Kelly)

politicians who insist on trying to take these rights away. Further, the fact that these antigun politicians continue to be elected by majorities means that large numbers of gun owners continue to vote to have their 2nd amendment rights taken away.

This article simply offers an alternative rifle action to provide for and protect your family. At least until those same politicians figure it out. There are excellent lever action rifles that have very large magazine capacities. These would be in handgun calibers like .357 Magnum, .44 Magnum, and .45Colt. These types of rifles make excellent home defense guns.

Magazine capacities in these calibers can be 15, 16, or 17 rounds. They are available from Winchester, Henry and Marlin. Home defense guns can also be

is compatibility with your handguns. The handgun calibers are also mild in the recoil department. My wife keeps a Marlin chambered in .45 Colt close at hand in our house. She shoots it well and the 250 gr. hard cast bullets pack a sledgehammer punch. Where we live, critters like coyotes are more likely intruders than the 2- legged ones. However, we do have an occasional encounter with a border jumper. Such is life within sight of our Canadian neighbors.

Lever action rifles are now also available in pretty much all of the popular hunting calibers, from .22 up to .45/70. There are options available from Browning and Henry for

Happy Easter!

Guns & Ammo: A Guide's Perspective



**by Tom Kelly,
Orient, ME**



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The Maine Woods

**Matt LaRoche,
Shirley, ME**

Timing is everything when it comes to dipping smelts. One of the primary factors triggering the smelt run is water temperature, 42 – 45 degrees is ideal. A good friend of mine, retired Game Warden Charlie

diehard outdoorsmen and women. I certainly enjoy getting out there and dipping a few of these silvery delicacies each spring. Dipping smelts is not for the faint of heart, because more often than not the trip

Smelting is one of the rites of spring for many diehard outdoorsmen and women. I certainly enjoy getting out there and dipping a few of these silvery delicacies each spring.

Davis, once told me that when the frogs start peeping in the spring the smelt are running. In northern Maine, the smelt run usually occurs in early May. It has been my experience that the smelt run occurs at or just before ice out in the lakes of northern Maine. A good place to ask if the smelt are running is at local sporting goods stores- however this information maybe a few days old.

Smelting is one of the rites of spring for many

turns out to be waiting beside the brook for a couple hours with the harvest of only a handful of smelts to take home.

There are two types of smelt commonly sought by the sporting community in Maine. Sea run smelt, that grow to maturity in the ocean and run up freshwater streams to spawn. These are usually caught by hook and line in a shanty along the tidal sections of rivers and streams. The second type of smelt and focus of this article is the landlocked smelt- commonly called the rainbow smelt.

The rainbow smelt

grows to maturity in freshwater lakes and ascend tributaries to spawn in the spring. The spawning run can last from a couple days to a couple weeks depending on the waterbody. Peak activity typically only lasts for a few days. Usually, the

smelting locations is the West Branch of the Penobscot where it runs into Ambajesus Lake. This run is usually heavy and lasts a week or more. When they are running well on the West Branch- one dip is typically all that is required

uncleaned and there really isn't that much difference. But my wife likes them cleaned, so we clean ours before cooking.

The traditional method of cooking smelt is to mix flour, corn meal and Cajun seasoning in a plastic bag. Put enough of the silvery little fish in the bag to fill the frying pan, then shake the fish in the bag until they are well coated with the mixture. Drop the smelt into a skillet of hot cooking oil and fry until they are cooked, then scoop them out of the pan with a slotted spoon and drain on paper towels, serve hot.

My wife's recipe- uses the same mix as above, but instead of frying them- she places them on a cookie sheet and drizzles melted butter over the seasoned fish. Then they are cooked in the oven at 425 degrees for about 20-minutes. They are best when eaten hot, right out of the oven. I eat them just like french fries, except I don't eat the tails. At the end of the meal, I have a nice little pile of fish tails on the side of my plate and very satisfied taste buds.

Matt LaRoche is a retired Superintendent of the Allagash Wilderness Waterway, owner of Maine Woods Guide Service and an avid outdoorsman. He can be reached at 207-695-2877 or at matt.la-roche2877@gmail.com. See www.mainewoodsguide.com



**Cleaning smelts is a chore but well worth it.
(Photo by Amanda Shortall)**

bigger the lake, the heavier and longer the smelt run.

Smelts normally run at night under cover of darkness but during the peak of the run can often be found at the lower end of the tributary swimming in big schools. It can be fun to dip during the day because the school of fish will move away from you as you try to get close enough to catch them.

One of my favorites

for a limit. There are special smelting regulations on the West Branch, so check the law book before smelting there.

Cleaning smelts is not much fun, as a matter of fact- once I have cleaned two quarts, I don't really want to eat any that night. I have a friend, Steve Day who doesn't bother cleaning his smelts- he just fries them heads and all. I have eaten them cleaned and

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(See page 49)

Woods

(Cont. from pg 3)

the Maine Legislature in 1985 I insisted that the wild turkey be designated as a "big game" species with all the rules regulations and penalties. Those of us who attain the designation as "turkeyholics" understand fully why we each feel turkeys are worth that high bar and intimately appreciate the "turkey woods."



Stu Bristol is a Master Maine Guide and Outdoor Writer. His columns and features have been published nationwide for nearly 60 years. Inducted into NE Wild Turkey Hunting Hall of Fame in 2019. He operates Orion Guide Service in Southern Maine and makes custom game calls at www.deadlyimpostergamecalls.com

Turkey

(Cont. from pg 6)

bow, but a jake saw me and alarm putted. I made a few quiet gobbler yelps to settle them down and the tom turned back to me at 20 yards. I placed the sight pin just above where the tail meets the body and squeezed the trigger. He collapsed on the spot when the arrow severed his spine and pinned him to the ground. At 21 lbs with a 10" beard, it was my best archery tom. Have a safe and successful spring turkey hunt.



Brian was the NWTF Regional Director for New England and Atlantic Canada for 3 years. In 2012 he was awarded the Maine Wild Turkey Conservation Award. He is a Life Member and 1st Director at Large of

the Maine Bowhunter's Association and was chosen Maine Bowhunter of the Year in 2005 and 2008. He is a NRA Life Member and longtime Member of the Sportsman's Alliance of Maine also serving on the SAM-ILA Board. He can be reached at bowhunter@mgemaine.com

Paradox

(Cont. from pg 9)

systems from harmony with, to dominance over the Earth. Shepard wrote that it was imperative that humans return to our roots and connect with nature. A lifestyle of hunting and gathering was one way to return to our authentic selves and begin to re-establish a more livable and sustainable connection

with the Earth.

These revelations would probably be of little surprise to hunter-conservationists like Teddy Roosevelt or Aldo Leopold or even preservationists like Henry David Thoreau or John Muir. They understood the importance of being intimately connected with Nature.


So, my epiphany scrawled in the blood-stained snow is this... I make no excuses for hunting. I achieve my truest nature in the wild. Hunting is encoded in my genes and is part of my identity and evolutionary heritage. Like the wolf, I am a participant, not bystander, in the perpetual saga of life and death. Hunting knaps my skills and senses to a keen edge, like a fine spear point. It provides me with novel challenges and insights -

just as it did to shape the minds and muscles of humans 100,000 years ago. Participating in this dance of life and death has given me the most profound, even spiritual, experiences. Shuddering-cold mornings and evenings have taught me to be patient and persistent. Hunting is as natural as cutting firewood in January, eating the first peas from the garden in June, or picking blueberries in August. When November comes and the beech leaves rattle with the first snow, the hunting gods call me to spend time with the deer.

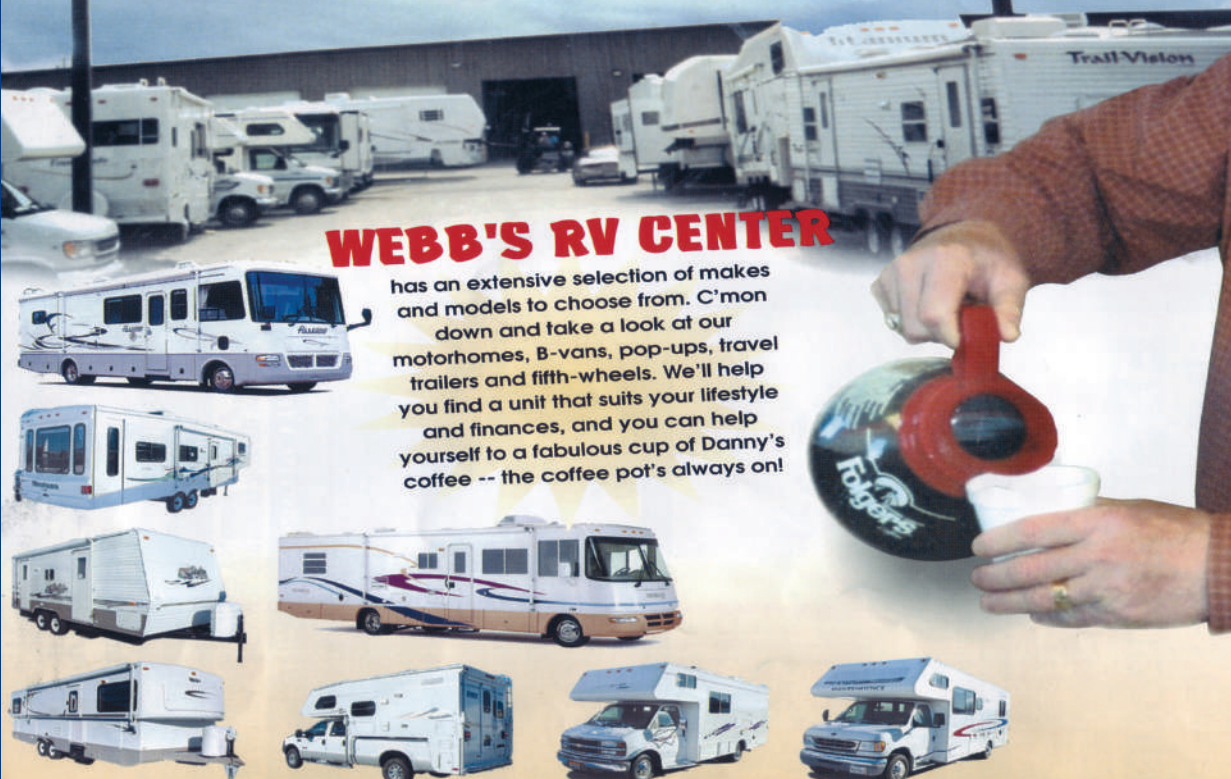


Mark McCollough is a retired wildlife biologist who lives in Hampden, Maine. He can be contacted at markmccollough25@gmail.com

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View From The River

by Laurie Chandler
Bremen, ME

Let's face it. April can be dreary. Watching brown earth emerge from snow that is far past its prime. Longing for the misty green of new leaves that are still a good month away. Maybe it's because I lived for a long while down south, where April brings azalea, dogwood, and cherry blossoms in full

It doesn't take much, this time of year, to lift a tired heart.

regalia. If I'm not careful, my thoughts dwell on summer delights rather than appreciating the present.

One April, ice-out came later than ever to mid-coast Maine. I watched the ice on a nearby pond darken to a deep, dull uniform black. Creaks and groans warned of the impending change as the lake strained to break its winter bonds. By the following day, a border of open water shone around the edge, mirroring the puffy clouds and pale blue sky above.

When the break-up came, it came fast. The solid sheet of ice we'd

lived with for months transformed overnight into a raft of jagged pieces pushed hither and yon by a vigorous wind. Along shore, shards of ice piled up against the gray rocks. Waterfowl began to arrive, the first a shy but elegant pair of hooded mergansers.

In the forest, too, life was stirring. When I try my hand at poetry, you know I'm feeling soulful. That same April week, I wandered a woodland path that was an old familiar friend. After my walk, this poem just seemed to write itself. Though perhaps a little silly, it captures the sentiment that still fills me every April.

It Doesn't Take Much

It doesn't take much, this time of year, to lift a tired heart.

Just a quiet hour to roam the woods, to wander with springtime dreams.

Rubber-clad feet sink deep in the mud, but at least it isn't ice.

No slippery, sliding, breath-taking suspense to see if you'll stay upright. Just a cushion, a carpet of softest duff, welcoming,

moist and brown.

It doesn't take much this time of year, to feel the throb of life.

A barred owl calls in the height of day, "Who cooks for you?" he asks.

Then comes a sound to drown out them all, a chorus of horrid croaks.

"What species is this?" you want to know, so stealthily you sneak near.

Quietly perch near a murky black pool that gradually comes to life, With tens or hundreds of busy gray frogs in a noisy springtime dance.

It doesn't take much, this time of year, to find beauty at every turn.

No need for a violet, a lupine, or rose... a humble skunk cabbage will do.

Squat down to look closely as the new plant unfurls,

And you'll be amazed at what you'll see.

Bright shiny purples and pale mottled greens have a beauty all their own.

No, it doesn't take much this time of year, for hope to spring anew.

The rowdy inhabitants of that vernal pool were wood frogs. The wood frog (*Lithobates sylvaticus*) has a distinctive black eye stripe and varies in color from the gray I'd seen to shades of brown, green, or even rust. A crowd of wood frogs can't be missed, as their repetitive quacking reverberates through the springtime woods.

Marvelously adapted to northern winters, these amphibians freeze solid beneath the leaf litter of the forest floor. This is



In April even a skunk cabbage can be reassuring.

possible because of high levels of glucose within their cells, which acts as a natural antifreeze. After weeks without breathing or even a heartbeat, they thaw out as the weather warms. Wood frogs are the only frog species to live above the Arctic Circle.

Wood frogs breed early. By late February or March, they move to vernal pools to mate. According to the University of Maine, males choose a mate by "hugging other frogs until they find one who is round enough to be carrying eggs." Their communal egg masses are attached to vegetation deep in the pool. The eggs hatch in 10 to 30 days, depending on the temperature. A month or so later, the tadpoles mature

into frogs, just in time for their dubious springtime chorus.

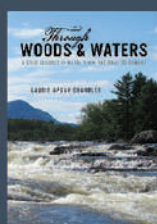
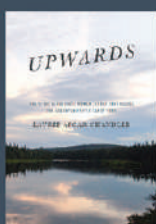
As we bid farewell to winter and anticipate summer, I hope you find the time to get outdoors—to look and listen and appreciate the sights and sounds of April.



Laurie Apgar Chandler is the author of *Through Woods & Waters*, which provides an adventurous look at Maine's Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument, and *Upwards*, the story of her 2015 solo self-propelled thru-paddle of the Northern Forest Canoe Trail. For more information or to purchase the books, visit www.laurieachandler.com

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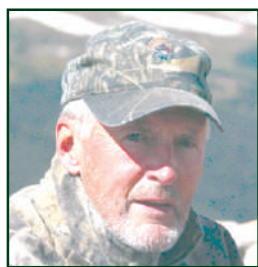
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Outdoors In Maine

by V. Paul Reynolds,
Ellsworth, ME

This event is true. The names have been changed. It took place on a deer hunt in northern Canada.

There was some snow on the ground, and more coming. Bill, with his rifle slung over his shoulder, was driving a four-wheeler

Bill's destination was a plywood deer-hunting blind, a mile or so up river, located on a bluff overlooking a dry river bed not far from the river itself. The temperature was just below freezing and large snowflakes were pelting Bill's

and final river crossing, a doe and a yearling appeared in front of him and bounded off. They caught his attention and he inadvertently drove to the left of the old four wheeler tracks and into the river and a deep hole. The four wheeler nosed over into the unseen watery abyss. In an instant, Bill was in icy water up to his neck and the ATV stalled out. The cold

water-filled pockets for his Bic lighter or mobile handheld radio, he realized with a quickened pulse that the two critical devices that could save him were in his day pack. It was strapped to the back of the four wheeler, completely underwater. He wasn't about

His adrenaline was flowing though, keeping his body heat up despite his waterlogged camo clothing. "How long is that good for?" he wondered.

At the third river crossing, Bill beheld way off in the distance what he later described as a "true

The four wheeler nosed over into the unseen watery abyss. In an instant, Bill was in icy water up to his neck and the ATV stalled out. The cold water stunned him momentarily but he bailed off the machine and floundered his way to the river bank.

along a river bed. As directed earlier by a hunt guide, he was following old four-wheeler tracks that led him up the river bed and across the different meandering river branches. Earlier in the hunt, a guide had left four-wheeler tracks across the river at specific locations, always where the river was the most shallow and safest to cross.

face as he bounced along. He stayed in the four-wheeler tracks and two different river crossings went smoothly, although he noticed that the water was up to the ATV's running boards, and the vehicle's exhaust made a disquieting glug glug sound as he bumped across the river's freestone bottom.

Just before the third

water stunned him momentarily but he bailed off the machine and floundered his way to the river bank.

"Oh my God," he said to himself, as he assessed his dilemma and glanced quickly at the shiny ATV handlebars protruding above the quick-flowing water. "I could be in trouble here."

Probing around in his



A seasoned outdoorsman, Bill knew he faced a very serious predicament. His adrenaline was flowing though, keeping his body heat up despite his waterlogged camo clothing.

(Illustration by V. Paul Reynolds)

to go back in that icy water for anything.

He made a decision. There was no choice. He would keep moving, even if he had to walk all the way back to camp. After crossing the river three times on foot, he would be a mile from the main dirt road, which was ten miles from camp. "There's an hour of daylight left. One of the other guys returning to camp are bound to find me, once I get to the main dirt road," he reasoned. "It's my best chance."

A seasoned outdoorsman, Bill knew he faced a very serious predicament.

miracle." Another hunter on a four-wheeler coming toward him! It was Jim, one of Bill's fellow hunters who, by sheer happenstance, had decided the last minute to hunt up this particular river bottom before dark. Bill waved his arms frantically in the air. Jim at first thought he was getting the wave off to hunt elsewhere and turned to go back from where he came. By chance he took one more look back and, from the more intense waving, sensed that something was wrong and headed back toward the signaling hunter.

(Shave cont. pg 41)



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Campfire Reminiscences

Joe Thompson, who had a camp on the shore of Houston Pond, west of Katahdin Iron Works, often wrote articles for several outdoor magazines, describing his many adventures. This tale was published in the Maine Sportsman in March of 1903.

"It was in the awful storm of 189—when, for eight consecutive days and nights we did not see the sun nor the moon; when the deer became so awfully poor that, half furnished, the floundered about in a deep snow, seeking the lumbermen's hovels for food and shelter when many of the lumbermen's horses had to be killed for lack of food; when the camps were literally buried in the eight feet of snow.

It was during this storm—the seventh day—that I heard, outside my camp, a faint hullo! A short time previous, I had cleared the snow from my door, and had shoveled a path to the surface, a rather uphill job.

My windows had been completely banked in by the snow, and although the middle of the day, I was reading by a lamp, when upon opening

the door a man, completely exhausted, covered with snow and his snowshoes still on, stumbled into the camp. Literally throwing himself into the nearest chair, he said:

"Here, I cannot get any further. I am played out. You must go on with this," handing me a telegram. "John's boy is dead, and if they bury him before John gets there, he'll go crazy, sure. You must go."

Showing the messenger where everything was that would end to make him comfortable in my camp, and lashing on snowshoes, pocketing a lunch and opening the door, I put out into the storm. Then, as never before, I did admire my beautiful, Canadian snowshoes. Extremely light, slightly turned up at the toes, they were just what I needed for the four and a half mile struggle before me in that blizzard.

Skirting the shore of

Houston pond, for I did not dare to breast that whirlwind of snow with no landmarks to guide me, I at last found the mouth of the old hauling road. Keeping this road, after a very fatiguing trip I at last reached the lumberman's camp, pretty well used up, but my present weariness was as nothing to what was before me. Well did I know, before I opened the door, that on account of the storm the men would all be inside, and the moment they caught sight of me would know that something was wrong. Mustering what courage I could, I burst open the door and stood before them. Not a word, not a sound, for the space of a full moment, and then the boss, advancing toward me said:

"Joe, what is it?"

"John, old man, brace up. I'm awfully sorry, John, but it's the way of the world," I said, as I handed him the telegram.



Old Tales from the Maine Woods

by Steve Pinkham
Quincy, MA

"I can't read it, Joe. What is it?"

"John, your boy is dead."

It was pitiable to see him groping about for his snowshoes, his mitts, his coat and his hat, in a dazed kind of way. At last, we started on our return trip. It was a terribly hard trip for us both. I was very tired, he was heartbroken. Stopping at my camp overnight, he resumed his journey at daybreak. On getting out

to the settlement, he found that there had been no train for four days. Setting out on his snowshoes, he traveled twenty two miles and arrived at the house just as the funeral was being held. He came back a week later, a broken-hearted man. It was his only boy, his baby."

Steve is an avid hiker, paddler and historian, having collected over 26,000 Maine Woods articles to date.

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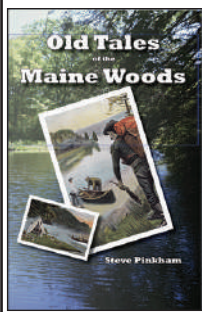
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What's In Your Woods

by Bud Utecht,
T4 Indian Purchase Township

When I was a kid, one of our winter hobbies was searching for shed antlers. Having an apple orchard helped tremendously because when the deer came in to feed the antlers would tangle in the trees and pull

matched sets were among my prizes.

As I moved further north over time, I started to look harder for moose sheds. While they are much bigger they are not always easier to find. They don't

the places where you find these treasures is where the moose and deer spend a lot of time.

Deer and moose can shed their antlers from mid December through March but most will drop later December through January. With the feeding of deer they will sometimes hold their antlers much longer. I

Deer and moose can shed their antlers from mid December through March but most will drop later December through January. With the feeding of deer they will sometimes hold their antlers much longer.

them loose. My very first one was found here and it was a four inch spike, great start for a lifetime of searching. Luckily, I was able to find much bigger ones during my years on the farm. During my youth we would find many deer antlers. However, the farm I lived on had no moose so we were limited to deer. That certainly was okay with me as I found at least 20 by the time I left home. Several really nicely

typically congregate in one area to feed, and they also aren't found in apple orchards. When they are shedding, the bulls do tend to hang near each other so sometimes you can find multiple antlers in the same area.

Now you are wondering how this fits with game cameras, which is usually what I write about? Well you find the antlers and you find great spots for cameras. Many times

try to get out in the woods during this time to locate places to put cameras and also places to come back to search for the antlers. Finding the antlers in the winter is better as they maintain their color and it keeps the rodents from chewing on them. Antlers are almost all calcium and rodents will seek them out and chew them up to get the minerals.

These places will get some amazing pictures and videos once you figure



The author with a shed.

them out. I have many of these bulls fighting and sparing as they will do this up until they shed. Sometimes the antlers are shed while sparing. We have found antlers right in the road that was all torn up from them doing battle the night before. I will tell you it is a thrill to get pictures of moose and deer doing battle and that's when you know you've hit the jackpot. I have a spot that every year the bulls come to one spot and do battle, which is rare but I can count on this

every October.

To me, finding shed antlers or getting them on the game camera is a trophy that will last a lifetime.

Bud Utecht is a Registered Maine Guide, owner of Buckhorn Camps, Browning trail camera dealer, and consultant. His trail cameras are strategically placed throughout the Maine Woods. Feel free to email Bud for trail camera tips or to discuss what's in your woods. bud@whatsinyourwoods.com

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(See page 49)

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At camp, this guy and his gundog - after a morning of chasing pa'tridge - found a comfy place to spend some time with their favorite read, the Northwoods Sporting Journal.

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Fish

(Cont. from pg 31)

mer in the gullets of landlocked salmon, togue, and sometimes whitefish. But this smelt's larger relative has taken hold to the extent that they're being jigged out of ice holes in winter, and also found (though in lesser numbers) in the digestive tracts of harvested fish.

This added forage may have helped us break through the size plateau that for many years has been the norm. But, before that, there were larger salmon, as the historical record shows in countless pictures from the 40's, 50's, and 60's. The game-fish-to-forage-fish ratio must have been conducive then to growing larger salmon and togue, and maybe, just maybe, we're moving in that direction again. Early signs are encouraging. And if what seems to be true actually is, then we owe a tip of the fishing hat to Jonesboro, and the Region C fisheries team led by Greg Burr.

Randy Spencer's new book, "Written on Water" is available from all on-line and brick and mortar book sellers. Reach Randy at randy31@earthlink.net, or via www.randyspencer.com

Shave

(Cont. from pg 38)

Bill said later that he never in his life saw such a welcome sight as "Jim on a rescue vehicle" coming his way. The pair made it back to camp long after dark, but only after a cold ten-mile ride on an open four wheeler.

Incredibly, back at camp, Bill was uncom-

fortable and looked like a camouflaged icicle when he dismounted off the four-wheeler, but didn't seem to be even in the early stages of hypothermia. He said that during the ten mile ride back to camp his outside clothing froze solid in the wind, and seemed to ward off some of the cold air from his body. Go figure.

In time, the ill-fated four-wheeler was retrieved from its watery location and towed home, by a guide.

That same guide stepped into Bill's camp and, without a word, dropped his soggy day pack on the floor and walked out, closing the door quietly.

That night, Bill reveled in his warm sleeping bag and said a prayer of thanks, not only for his friend Jim but for whatever fate or Divine intervention brought them together on the same track at the crucial moment.

The author is editor of the "Northwoods Sporting Journal." He is also a Maine guide and host of a weekly radio program — "Maine Outdoors" — heard Sundays at 7 p.m. on "The Voice of Maine News - Talk Network." He has authored three books; online purchase information is available at www.maineoutdoorpublications.com or www.sportingjournal.com. Contact email — vpaulr@tds.net

News

(Cont. from pg 15)

1/2 inches. Not only did he earn a cash prize of \$400 for first place, he also took home a new power ice auger for landing the largest fish of the derby.

Other winners includ-



Caleb Slocumb of North Yarmouth emerged as the big winner of the 21st Sebago Lake Ice Fishing Derby, putting a 15.86-pound, 36 1/2-inch togue on the ice.

ed Patrick Keeran of Beaver Cove with a 28-inch, 6.81-pound landlocked salmon and Kerry Curtis of Dresden with a trout weighing 2.49 pounds and going 20 inches. Lennon Pleasant of Conway, Massachusetts, caught the largest perch (21 1/2 inches, 2.88 pounds) and David Kosewki of Falmouth, Massachusetts iced the biggest bass (20 1/4 inches, 6.39 pounds).

Rachel Perley of Medway edged Ryan Nadeau of Hermon in a tiebreaker as both caught (News cont. pg 45)



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Maine Outdoor Adventure

by Rich Yvon,
Bradford, ME

Maine, the pine tree state, has recorded history that goes back to 1000 BC. After a global warming, humans returned with a race that archeologists call The Red Paint People because excavations found they covered ancestors' graves with red clay. The existence of organized burial sites indicate that the Red Paint People

The English initially treated Maine as a natural resource to be exploited. In 1685 the Crown created the position of Surveyor of Pines and Timber in Maine, who was responsible for identifying wood lots. The Abenaki Nation were more settled and had villages all along the Penobscot River. Their society had a specific migratory pattern

The Micmac were nomadic and hunters moving back-and-forth from today's New Brunswick, Canada, a tradition they follow to this day by traveling from New Brunswick every year to work the Aroostook and Washington counties commercial blueberry and potato harvests.

had settlements. They subsisted on hunting and fishing. Around 1000 BC two major native peoples, who are direct ancestors of today's modern native people, settled in Maine.

The Micmac were nomadic and hunters moving back-and-forth from today's New Brunswick, Canada, a tradition they follow to this day by traveling from New Brunswick every year to work the Aroostook and Washington counties commercial blueberry and potato harvests.

geared to the seasons. In spring they would fish in the river and plant squash and other vegetables along the riverbank. In summer they would go to the ocean and saltwater fish (they had a system of salt curing), in autumn they would return up river to harvest the crops they planted in the spring and in winter they moved inland to the forests to hunt wild game for meat and clothing.

Other Native Nations migrated into this area including the Wabanaki,

Penobscot, and Passamaquoddy. Most settled along the Penobscot River above present-day Old Town and subsisted primarily on river fish and wild game.

Meanwhile, to get settlers inland, the British Royal Governor of the Massachusetts By Colony, awarded land grants to anyone who would come to "the wild lands" to harvest. In exchange for claim to their own property, the deeds required that all pines 24-inches or more in



Ice out white perch in Maine.

in places such as Vermont, New York, Pennsylvania and eventually out west to Saginaw Michigan. After a 40 year logging era, Maine continued its economy by making such things as shoes, linens, guns and farming.

To navigate down the Penobscot river, a glimpse of the old world can be seen and be imagined how life existed by its earliest inhabitants. In 1912, a tradition started that the first wild, native salmon caught on the Penobscot River would be delivered to the White House as a gift to the President to get publicity for sport fishing in Maine. However, discharge from pulp and paper mills and raw sewerage along the upper river made fish inedible by 1954 and the practice stopped until cleanups restored the event in 1980.

Today, Maine is still rich in its woods, waters and fields. Fishing and hunting traditions still exist from native people and it's visitors. Maine is the only state in the continental U.S. to have wild, native Arctic Charr. These fish are found in twelve of Maine's glacial lakes and is currently threatened. Fishing

is permitted, but with strict regulation. The state, also has the largest intact wild, native brook trout waters in the continental United States. The Togue or Lake trout, is Maine's oldest living wild, native, char living in glacial lakes in North America. The Togue are commonly found in deep cold-water lakes, but will also be in rivers when rainbow smelt are spawning in the spring. When Togue swims out of their cold lake water into cold spring run-off flowages, they are primarily feeding on spawning smelt along with Land Lock Salmon.

Spring fishing is prime time for both fly and spin fishing sports.



Rich is a Registered Master Maine Guide. He owns and operates Twin Maple Outdoors guide service and sporting lodge located in Bradford, Maine. When Rich is not on adventures, he serves as a board member for the Native Fish Coalition, Maine chapter. He is also an outdoor writer, tree farmer, fly-fishing instructor and certified NRA firearms instructor."



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The Chamberlain Farm

As I traveled through the Allagash with a group of folks from all over the country, I was often asked about Chamberlain Farm. There is not simple answer, but to start it is necessary to understand what logging was like in the 1800's. It was all muscle power, man, horse and oxen. To operate on the scale needed to get timber from the Allagash region to the Penobscot wa-

cleared land and would serve as a supply base of lumbering operations for more than 80 years. The farm raised large numbers of cattle and sheep, as well as potatoes, grain and vegetables. A sizable orchard was established and in time fresh apples were available for woods cooks, who baked hundreds of apple pies to feed hungry lumberjacks. Of course feed

work, cutting, yarding and landing, was done in the winter. This meant that in the spring, when the drive went down the river the draft animals, mostly oxen at first, but later horses were left without anything to do until the following cutting season.

Wilderness farms, like Chamberlain, provided the necessary work to keep them in shape and



A paddlewheeler, the H.W. Marsh, brought people and supplies to the Farm across Chamberlain Lake.

terways where it could feed the hungry mills in Bangor. It was not practical to bring all the needed equipment and supplies from more civilized areas of the state. So, a more localized source of supplies and equipment was needed.

A farm would be the source. The problems involved in toting supplies more than 150 miles into the wilderness were staggering. Anything that could be produced locally would be money in the pockets of the owners and operators. In 1846 Eben Coe started to clear what was to become Chamberlain Farm. The farm would eventually become an enormous agricultural undertaking of more than 600 acres of

for livestock, hay oats, etc. was raised as well.

In one year when the farm was in operation records show that it employed seven men and produced 700 bushels of oats and 75 tons of hay. The buildings at the farm were enormous. They were constructed of eight inch squared timbers laid up log cabin style. No doubt the number and size of the buildings increased through the years. Henry David Thoreau described the farm during his 1857 visit as "two or three log buildings close together". The buildings were later shingled and from the outside looked much like the farm buildings 150 miles to the south. All of the woods

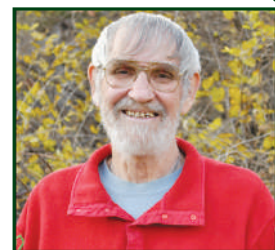
the pasture to keep them fed. In return they provided the farm with the power needed for production. Chamberlain Farm was the supply base for the whole Allagash headwaters operations, serving not only the Coe-Pingree operators, but other smaller ones as well. Visitors to the farm today are apt to be disappointed as only one building is evident, but if one takes the time to explore a little inland the remains old buildings and of teeming operations can be seen. Here and there are abandoned farm implements and also evidence of land tillage as well as habitation.

I remember on one visit standing beside a large rock lined hole and won-

Northwoods Voyager



by Gil Gilpatrick,
Brunswick, ME



dering about the building that once stood there and of the people who might have lived there. It boggles my mind to think about what life must have been like in this wild area back then. There were a number of other, smaller farms along

ness Waterway. Explore some of them on your next visit.



Gil Gilpatrick is a Master Maine Guide, and is the first living recipient of the Legendary Maine Guide award. He is a life

A farm would be the source. The problems involved in toting supplies more than 150 miles into the wilderness were staggering. Anything that could be produced locally would be money in the pockets of the owners and operators.

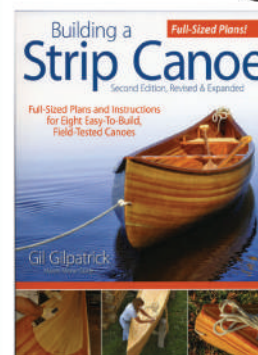
the Allagash. There is Farm island where a small farm operated and pastured their hogs on a smaller nearby island. No fences needed! Farther down the river was Harvy Farm on Long Lake. Of course most Allagash travelers are familiar with Michaud Farm located on the west side of the river just above Allagash Falls.

A lot of history tied up in these and other locations along the Allagash Wilder-

member of the Maine Professional Guides Association, a founding member of the Maine Wilderness Guides Organization, and served as a member of the Advisory Board for the Licensing of Guides from 1996 to 2010. He is a member of the New England Outdoor Writers Association and is the author of seven outdoor-related books. Contact him at Gil@GilGilpatrick.com

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Marsh Island Chronicles

by Matthew Dunlap,
Old Town, ME

As I write this, it's still winter, although the day is unseasonably warm—in the sixties—and as I look out the window, there are a pair of people with a fly rod in Capitol Park in Augusta, Maine's state capitol, one of them learning how to

we begin again. In the spirit of always beginning, I like to remember where some of my adventures began.

My own fly-fishing education began, like the people outside this warm day, on the lawn of the Maine State House. I was

My own fly-fishing education began, like the people outside this warm day, on the lawn of the Maine State House. I was a new legislator, and as a member of the Joint Standing Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, was a little overwhelmed about what I didn't know.

cast a fly line perhaps for the first time.

Many avid sportsmen can scarcely remember catching their first fish or shooting their first upland bird. We ride the swells and waves of the changing seasons, moving from the height of a mayfly hatch to the warm evenings of bass fishing to some late-season ocean fishing to fall fishing into duck and upland bird season, punctuated by the crisp fall days of deer hunting, and maybe running some rabbits and drilling holes for ice fishing. Then,

a new legislator, and as a member of the Joint Standing Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, was a little overwhelmed about what I *didn't know*. To be sure, I had grown up on a farm, and had done plenty of bass fishing, and while I was no expert deer hunter, I knew the ropes.

I had gone in on an apartment rental near the capitol with some other legislators—Old Town is far enough away from the state capitol to make that prudent when the weather's bad or business runs late.

One of those legislators was the late Senator Dick Ruhlin from Brewer.

Sportsmen who know anything—*anything*—about Atlantic salmon fishing know about Dick Ruhlin. At one time I think he was president of every salmon club in Maine. He knew everything about fly tying and fly fishing, and at the apartment, set up a work station to tie flies when we

were there overnight. He also owned a fishing camp on the Miramachi River in New Brunswick. As the session moved along, the note came from the presiding officers that we wouldn't have session over the April school vacation week. At the apartment, Dick invited a couple of us to come to Canada with him that week and fish for Atlantic salmon. I could hardly believe my luck at having the opportunity. There was only a couple of gaps; one, I had no gear, and two, I had no idea how



"After believing that a sportsman needed years of meditation and guidance from monks in a Tibetan monastery in order to cast a fly line, I was amazed at how simple and intuitive it turned out to be."

to cast a fly rod.

The first problem was resolved easily enough with a late-night trip to L. L. Bean in Freeport, where, following the advice of my fly-fishing expert friends, I picked up a modestly-priced starter kit that included a rod, reel, and all the line and backing. Then I just had to learn how to use it.

I was at the State House cafeteria for lunch after session and before the afternoon committee work when I ran into Don Kleiner, who represented

the Maine Professional Guides Association in our committee. I laughed about my problem. "Do you have the stuff with you?" he asked with a smile. I affirmed I had it in my truck. "Let's meet out front after you get done," he said.

So it came to pass after I met up with him in the early evening on the front lawn of the State House that in about fifteen minutes, Don had me casting an 8-weight fly line out about forty or so yards. Hitting a target would have (Fly Fish cont. pg 54)

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News

(Cont. from pg 41)

cusk measuring 28 inches and 5.09 pounds, and James Smith of Bradford was tops in the pickerel category (5.35 pounds, 25 1/4 inches).

In the ages 5-15 division, Keith Cook of Skowhegan won a lifetime fishing license for his 4.12-pound, 23-inch togue.

The fishing was a little slow on Saturday as anglers registered 216 fish, including 106 pickerel, 54 togue and 29 perch. The action picked up considerably on

Sunday as participants took 190 pickerel, 75 perch and 38 togue among 349 registered fish.

The two-day total was 565.

In Cumberland County, anglers braved the chilly temperatures and predictably unpredictable ice conditions on Sebago Lake during the 21st Sebago Lake Ice Fishing Derby.

The event, sponsored by the Sebago Lake Rotary, attracted some 800 registrants to its events, which encompassed Sebago and all bodies of water in Cumberland County.

Caleb Slocumb of

North Yarmouth emerged as the big winner of the derby, putting a 15.86-pound, 36 1/2-inch togue on the ice.

His entry easily outdistanced runner-up Jonathan Sarbins (10.55 pounds, 30.5 inches) and third-place winner Andrew Dalton (9.80 pounds, 32 inches).

Ben Carlin made it a clean sweep in the pike portion of the proceedings. He won the division with a 35-incher that

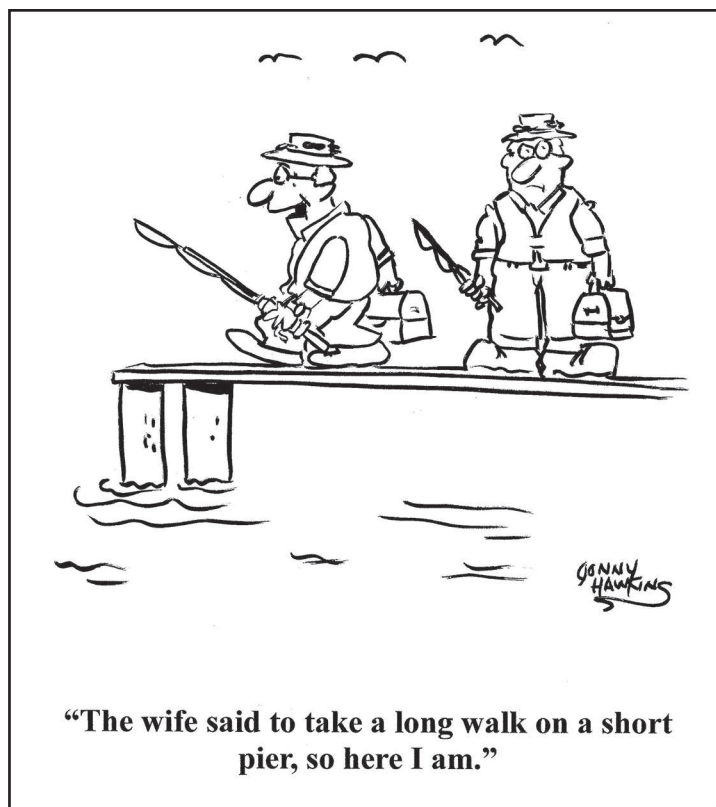
weighed 9.48 pounds, but also claimed second (34 3/4 inches, 8.80 pounds) and third (31 inches, 7.38 pounds).

Add it all up, that's 25.66 pounds and 8 feet, 4 3/4 inches of northern pike. The species was illegally introduced into Sebago almost 20 years ago and may pose a long-term threat to the landlocked salmon, lake trout and feeder fish in Maine's second largest lake.

Other category win-

ners were Devin Prue, pickerel (3.76 pounds, 25 1/4 inches) and Greg Lachance, perch (1.54 pounds, 14.5 inches).

This year, the Sebago derby also offered contest entries to anglers for each fish they registered. The move was made to encourage taking more fish out of the lake, but future visitors to the Preble Street shelter in Portland also will benefit as donated fish are processed and used to make chowder.



Cracker Barrel

by Homer Spit



Big Game Ammo Choices

In the interest of transparency, as the politicians say, please know that Homer Spit owns no stocks of any ammunition manufacturers. Know, too, that although an avid and longtime big game hunter, I am a babe in the woods when it comes to ballistics. In high school, physics was never my strong suit. I understand muzzle velocity, but start talking about the bullet's ballistic coefficient, muzzle energy, controlled expansion downrange, and so forth and you are drifting above my pay grade.

I have learned, however, that ammo matters.

In my early years as a Maine deer hunter, I would have argued otherwise. Just give me a box of bullets in .35 Remington, any old brand will do. If the round would maintain energy at 50 yards, and maybe cut a little brush on its way to the target, it would suffice. It wasn't the ammo, dude, it was the marksman, the guy behind the gun that put the meat on the game pole.

Much later in life, elk hunting became habit forming. And, all of a sudden, shots at big game at 200 yards and beyond became the new normal. Ammo choices were part of the hunting calculus. "Controlled expansion" was the elk hunter's mantra. The challenge was to figure out which brand of premier (read expensive) ammunition would get the job done and deliver at longer trajectories.

Confused and conflicted by all of the articles about premier ammo written by respected ballistics writers, I bounced around and tried many different brands over the years, Hornady, Nosler, Barnes, Federal Premium, and some others.

Surprise. All brands killed elk when the shots were well placed. And, yes, you are right: cowboys for years have been bagging elk with old, beat up lever action 30-30s and conventional lead bullets.

Remington Core-Lokt rifle bullets have been around since 1939. They have become my latter day ammo of choice, for elk, deer, bear or moose. And, as a matter of fact, there is a brand new CoreLokt on the market. According to Bryce Towsley writing in American Hunter, the Remington Core-Lokt set the ammo standard way back then. It was the first controlled expansion rifle bullet offered in America. The newest Core-Lokt offers a tipped version of this fabled bullet. He says it's the same basic bullet, but that the new one is more accurate, holds energy longer and shoots flatter.

Bugle Magazine's recent issue carries a feature article on premier big game ammo and lists no less than 15 manufacturers! Of course, each brand boasts unique ballistic qualities. You do get what you pay for, even with ammo. If you are planning an elk hunt in open Big Sky country with your new Winchester 300 Mag, you might as well chip to the pricey ammo.

The expensive bullets do shoot flatter and do hold together and penetrate at longer distances. On the other hand, if you are like me and get confused by all of the Madison Avenue superlatives on hot loads you can never go wrong with the old standby, Remington Core-Lokt.



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On The Prowl

by Justin Merrill,
Cherryfield, ME

If your creative imagination never dabbled in the joining of fishing and coyote hunting simultaneously, that's quite alright. Seriously, choose a pond or lake that lays smack dab in the middle of prominent coyote habitat, launch your canoe, cast a line, and sit back with your rifle resting on your lap. You'll most likely be some glad you did. Predator hunting and fishing at the same time, hmm... was a time I used to think it wasn't possible. Check all state laws before embarking on this type of adventure. A lot of people hunt from canoes here in Maine.

Think for a moment that you're relaxing in a canoe that's anchored down and you're watching your fishing bobber while keeping a look out for coyotes that may appear on the closest shoreline. Lack of

human disturbance, favorable habitat, and a prevailing wind boosts your confidence. A twitch, a bob, and a set hook resulted in your limit of trout at about the time you heard the faintest crinkling noises up on shore. Your paw finds the stock of your rifle as your noggin swivels to the left

Whenever I'm hunting, fishing, hiking, whatever the outdoor sport may be, the quiet solitude of being in nature inadvertently increases my hearing abilities. You're a hunter and probably can relate.

so your beady eyes can scan the wooded shoreline for the culprit. 'Gulp', as you swallow the salivating saliva. The craving for battered pan fried trout has to be put on hold a moment longer so you can rest the scope's crosshairs on the front shoulder of the big coyote walking briskly but cautiously along the lake shore. You just imagined yourself fishing and shoot-

ing a coyote all at the same time.

You and I might not have what it takes to read a coyote mind to figure out why one might appear in plain sight with an odd looking 'Lock Ness' monster looking back at it from a lake. We can only guess what might be on that predator's mind as it meanders along the lake shore. I prefer to just sit,

can take advantage of this by paddling up or down a stream that harbors cherry trees along the banks. If you thought I was crazy to ambush coyotes from a boat while fishing - now what do you think?

Now, calm your nerves, I'm sure you want to know why I thought to go fishing for coyotes so I'm going to inform you. It was a typical sunny day

closest to my position. This coyote stopped several times to look at me but just kept its course.

Whenever I'm hunting, fishing, hiking, whatever the outdoor sport may be, the quiet solitude of being in nature inadvertently increases my hearing abilities. You're a hunter and probably can relate. When our minds are at ease with all worldly cares put on hold the peaceful state of being seems to heighten our senses. I call this 'Predator Mode' and any out of place noise, smell, or sight will signal to the brain that the birds went quiet and the squirrel jumped onto the closest tree trunk for a mighty good reason. The reason being - why you should go try fishing for coyotes.



Justin has a Wildlife Biology Degree from Unity College. Justin has thousands of acres to hunt on every year and it's not uncommon to find him scouting and hunting year round. He is a member of the NEOWA (New England Outdoor Writers Association). His book: "Wild Maine Outdoors - Hunting Tactics, Tricks, & Secrets" is now available in some stores and online at www.wildmaineoutdoors.com

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relax, catch fish, and hope a coyote shows up to watch me reel in the big one. A coyote doesn't want to come within one hundred yards of my boat or it will become fish bait.

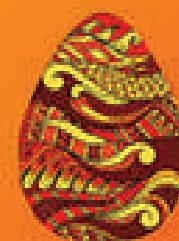
About this time you might be thinking fishing for coyotes could work. But if you are thinking hunting coyotes from a boat is a bad idea, just think about this: where I live and hunt it's not uncommon for a fellow to get in his canoe, rifle and all, to float down stream through a forest to shoot a black bear out of a cherry tree. I said the same thing - "Hugh". Bear hunting season opens at about the time the non-native cherry trees have fruit for the black bear to climb for. An eager hunter

in Maine when I pushed myself off shore with my fins. No! you read that right! 'Fins', I was sitting in the water floating in a float tube fly-fishing for brook trout. The pond I happened to be fishing was surrounded by ridges of a mixed forest stand forming a funnel for passing wildlife, (a key factor), that might want to get from point A to point B. With my dry fly gracefully seated on the water, the peacefulness around me was disturbed by odd noises coming from shore. My little ears grew an inch as they honed in on random sounds coming from a nearby ridge. Crunching leaves gave way to a large gray fazed coyote walking hurriedly down hill towards the shore

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Kineo Currents



by **Suzanne AuClair,**
Rockwood, ME

In May we are canoeing the St. John River. For the uninitiated, it lies west of the Allagash Wilderness Waterway and meanders the remotest section of Maine. We will put in at Baker Lake, a good two hours northwest of Moosehead Lake, and end at Dickey, near the town of Allagash. It is a long stretch and, if you follow the river all the way, it converges with the Allagash River in Allagash, then pretty much divides the northern border between Maine and New Brunswick, cuts easterly, and eventually empties into the Bay of Fundy, Canada. What a world!

It has been a long time since I have been on such a grand river and I cannot wait. Mid-May could bring anything. It is quite early, so the spring water might be at its best flow. The water will be very cold. Usually, even here at Moosehead, ice-out does

not occur until late April or the first week of May. It could rain most of the time. On the other hand, it could turn out too warm, and buggy. The last couple of years have been dry, with little spring run-off and not a lot of snow, so we are due for the rains.

It does not matter to me. We used to camp at Baker Lake and try for muskies. Baker holds special meaning to me. A long time ago, I was going to move to Alaska. But before moving, I circled Baker Lake with a pencil on the map, with the idea that it was far into the northwest of Maine and would be a good place to go before leaving. I did not tell anyone. A couple of months later, I met Roger AuClair, who said he was disappointed because his buddy

had to bow out of a trip and he did not know what to do. I asked where he was going. He said Baker Lake. The rest, as they say, is history. It will mean a great deal to me to begin this trip at Baker Lake.

We will be loading out at another place of significance, in Dickey, where the St. John meets the Little Black River. Many years ago, my uncles, who are from Canada and know

ting up camp, eating cold beans and hotdogs in the back of the truck with a tarp overhead. The night was spent with sleeping bags pulled up over head and face because the black flies were swarming, and vicious. No one slept. No one talked much either. We just waited for first light. The rain stopped. Coffee and a fire helped the outlook. We split up to fish and met for a good lunch

A person unfamiliar with the land would think this was a place that needed to be improved. These are past memories, and now I am looking to make some new ones.

The St. John River, an unknown flowing between these two more familiar places, at Baker Lake and at the Little Black, will do just that. It is not too much to say that it is one of the last great places in Maine.



Suzanne AuClair lives near Rockwood. She has been writing about the Moosehead Lake region for 27 years and produced "The Origins, Formation & History of Maine's Inland Fisheries Division." She is an award-winning member of the New England Outdoor Writers Assn.

It has been a long time since I have been on such a grand river and I cannot wait. Mid-May could bring anything.

this area, took me into that territory, where we fished and camped along the Little Black. That trip was a mix of misery and magic. The water was very low. It rained buckets. We ended up trying to wait out the rain before set-

later. An uncle took me deep into the woods, and showed me a place of pure magic, where tiny trout swarmed in their own dark, in a massive spongy place fed by many underground springs, under fallen trees that did not look like much.

Learning

(Cont. from pg 32)
jumped and disappeared.

What happened in those two areas was opposite of what I would have thought, so I had to

think about why? In the mountain area, there were very few does. In the low area there were plenty of does. The conclusion I came to was that the bucks lived in the mountain area all summer and fall. They

made plenty of sign, but as soon as the rut started, they headed out in search of does. Apparently not many bucks lived in the low ground area but traveled to it looking for does when the rut started. It's the only explanation I can think of. Next fall, I'll see if the same things happen in those areas as well as some other signpost areas. There is always something new to learn in the deer woods!

Until next month, good luck on the trail!



Hal is a Master Maine Guide and Author He lives in Moose River with his wife Deb He can be contacted at: hal@bigwoods-bucks.com

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Knives for Survival

There are probably a million or more different types and styles of knives. How do you sort through them and figure out what the best knife is? There is no one size fits all answer when it comes to knives. What is right for one person is totally wrong for another. There is no one perfect knife, only the knife that is perfect for you. For some people, the best answer is to not even carry a knife.

Every knife has strengths and weaknesses. A knife is simply a tool, no more and no less. Knives don't have to be expensive to be good quality. There are several companies who produce excellent knives for \$50 or less, some are much less. You can buy custom made knives for several hundred dollars but even those are not always the best knife for you.

Let's start with pocket knives. Basically, pocket knives have blades that fold into the handle so they are safe to carry in your pocket. The first kind is a single blade knife. Most of them have a lock to keep the blade open when you are using it. Buck, Ontario,

and CRKT are all companies that make great quality single blade knives.

The next is multi-blade knives, think Swiss army knives. They are knives with other tools added such as screwdrivers, can openers, saws, scissors, etc. Victorinox is the knife I carry and use daily. I have owned one model or another since I



was about six years old.

Multi-tools are the last group of pocketknives we will consider. These are more tools with knife blades included. A couple examples are Leatherman and Gerber brand. These are folding pliers with blades/tools in the handles. It all depends on what you want to do with the knife and what tools you need.

Fixed blade knives do not fold. The blade and handle are all one piece; they are sometimes called belt knives. They range in

size from a couple inches long to more than a couple feet for machetes. Again, you need to figure out what job you want to do and then decide the knife you want.

Sometimes the best way to choose a knife is to go to a sporting goods store and ask to see the display knives. That way you can feel the size of the handles, the size of the blades, and the balance and overall feel of the knife.

The best way to start with an outdoor/camp knife is a 3 or 4 inch general



Basics Of Survival

by Joe Frazier,
Bangor, ME

camping a few times a year, keep your knife in your kitchen instead of packed away. Use it for food prep at home and you will know how it will perform and what to expect from it when you are in the woods. As with all your gear, your back yard is a great place to learn to use new equipment.

Some people are not

in a couple different sizes.

All the brands I am recommending here are my opinion only. There are hundreds of brands and custom knife makers who make great knives, these are simply brands I have used and I trust.

Like any tool, knives need to be cared for properly. Most knives are made to last a lifetime and are very

**A knife is simply a tool, no more and no less.
Knives don't have to be expensive to be good quality.
There are several companies who produce excellent knives
for \$50 or less, some are much less.**

purpose knife. Mora brand offers several models for less than \$20 that are rugged and will last a lifetime. Buck, Cold Steel, Camillus, and CRKT also offer great knives at a very reasonable price. If you are looking for a knife to put in a survival kit that you will not use often, get a second knife that is the same model so you can get familiar with it before an emergency.

Whatever knives you use, you should be familiar with how they feel and how to use them. If you only go

comfortable with using a knife, and that is fine. When you are putting together a survival or camping kit for small children they should not have knives either. A good pair of scissors can do most cutting jobs and are much safer. For adults, get a solid pair with metal handles. Electricians scissors are a great choice. They are built solid, made to cut difficult items, and some come with a nice leather belt sheath. They are available at most any hardware store. Kline brand make very good quality scissors

rugged, but you should never abuse them. Keep them as sharp as possible, hand wash and don't put them in a dishwasher, and keep them lightly oiled with food grade oil.

You really don't need to spend a fortune to get a great quality knife. Find one that fits your hand and you are comfortable with. That is YOUR perfect knife.



Joe is a husband, father, author, and marine. Joe#193@ gmail.com

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Vermont Ramblings

by Dennis Jensen,
Vermont

I made it all the way up to Montpelier last week to take in a meeting of the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Board. The board, appointed by the governor, is made up of one representative from each county so it consists of 14 members.

column.

But it so happened that, far too often, while discussing the deer kill and the moose kill in 2021, members of the board and Fish and Wildlife biologists repeatedly used a word, a word I find most

And so, as the term gets tossed around more and more, it has become the buzz word for hunting.

The board takes recommendations from the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department, votes those recommendations either up or down and they become part of the regulations. I hadn't been to a board meeting for quite a long time and managed to find two great topics that I could write about in a future

column. But it so happened that, far too often, while discussing the deer kill and the moose kill in 2021, members of the board and Fish and Wildlife biologists repeatedly used a word, a word I find most

offensive, mostly because it soft-sells what we all do in the woods. Interestingly enough, the first time I ever read this word was decades ago, out of the mouth of the then commissioner of the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department.

A department biologist explained about "the

moose harvest" last year. No one even flinched at the sound of that word. But I did. Every time I hear somebody from Fish and Wildlife or some phony deer hunting "expert" on one of those staged deer hunting shows talks about how one can go about "harvesting" a buck or a moose or a turkey or whatever, all I can think about is how language, the use of a certain word or words, can distort the truth.

Now I have a pretty good idea as to why this — I would go so far as to call it obscene — term "harvest" came to be. Heck, we can't go around talking about "killing" something because, you know, people who do not hunt or, worse, do not like the concept of hunting may be offended by that word. So let's soften that up a bit, shall we?

"Friendly fire," the



The author poses with a deer he "harvested."
(Photo by Dennis Jensen)

term used to define the deaths or injury to troops by their comrades can hardly be called "friendly" but there you have it. There are no more "used cars." Now they are "pre-owned." Perhaps television, or more to the point, television advertising, has been in the forefront of distorting the meaning of words, softening them to make them

more appealing. Okay, I get it. But I do not have to like it.

And this ugly term is spread further and further. I was watching Joe Rogan, a smart, informed character who conducted some of the best interviews on YouTube with a variety of minds, great and small. Rogan took up elk hunting a few years back and, listening to him, you just know he is now a devoted hunter. But, boy, was I surprised and disappointed to hear Rogan talk about how he "harvested" this elk with his bow.

And so, as the term gets tossed around more and more, it has become the buzz word for hunting. Here's my take on all of this sad talk: Somewhere along the line, maybe 20 or 25 years ago, some bozo came up with the word "harvest" and it just caught on. Not with me, no sir.

So now we have all the politically correct folks who no longer "kill" their deer. Now they "harvest" their deer. Me? I kill my deer and turkeys. I harvest tomatoes and carrots and hot peppers from my garden. Wait a moment. (Harvesting cont. pg 53)

Vermont

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Trout Fishing Opens

Open water trout anglers get really antsy by the end of March, often casting on the lawn and dreaming of opening day. This year that occurs on Saturday, April 9. Like so many others I will be plying the waters of local streams hoping to entice a trout to hit.

As I write this mid February, there is no way to know what opening day will bring. Often the water is high and cold and the fish lethargic. Fishing slowly and deep often works best.

Small ponds and many lakes are still ice covered but often there is a little open water at inlets and outlets that can produce some action.

There were many changes to the fishing regulations that took effect January 1 including lower limits for trout so pay close attention to the Digest.

While we are out pursuing trout, especially along streams, is a good time to scout for turkeys. The spring turkey season opens May 1 statewide. The youth and novice hunting weekend is April 23-24.

We can take two bearded turkeys and, with the lack of snow and cold temperatures we have had this winter, there should be plenty of birds when the season opens.

Spring Snow Goose Season

Vermont's spring snow goose hunt opened March 11 and continues through April 23.

Since 2009, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has annually issued a "Conservation Order" to allow the reduction of the population of migrating greater

and lesser snow geese as well as Ross' geese. The numbers of these geese have grown so high that they are destroying habitat for themselves and other species.

During spring migration, snow geese typically move through the Champlain Valley in late March and early April. They usually pass through Vermont quickly in route to their spring staging areas along the St. Lawrence River

project leader. "This increase has resulted in damage to agricultural crops and marsh vegetation in staging and wintering areas from Quebec to North Carolina."

The Vermont 2022 Spring Snow Goose Conservation Order will occur statewide. The daily bag limit is 15 snow geese, and there is no possession limit. Waterfowl hunting regulations in effect last fall will apply during

There were many changes to the fishing regulations that took effect January 1 including lower limits for trout so pay close attention to the Digest.

Valley. They remain there for about a month before moving on to their nesting areas in the Eastern Canadian Arctic.

"The breeding population of greater snow geese has grown from approximately 50,000 birds in the mid-1960s to 714,000 birds today," said David Sausville, Vermont's wildlife management program manager and waterfowl

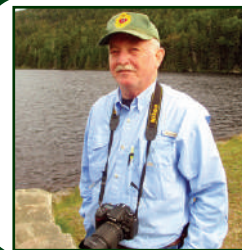
the 2022 Spring Snow Goose Conservation Order with the exception that unplugged shotguns and electronic calls may be used and shooting hours will be extended until one half hour after sunset.

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Outdoors In Vermont

by Gary W. Moore,
Bradford, VT

has proposed issuing 100 moose hunting permits in Vermont's Wildlife Management Unit E in the northeastern corner of the state in order to reduce the impact of winter ticks on the moose population. The proposal was accepted by the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Board at its February 16 meeting so it is likely by the time you read this it will have completed the regulatory process.

WMU E is primarily Essex County down to Route 2 and is home to the highest moose density in the state.

The goal of the department's 2022 moose harvest recommendation is to improve the health of moose in WMU-E by reducing the number of moose and thereby reducing the abundance and

impact of winter ticks.

Moose project biologist Nick Fortin pointed out that, "Moose density in WMU E is still more than one moose per square mile, significantly higher than any other part of the state. Moose densities greater than one per square mile support high numbers of winter ticks which negatively impact moose health and survival."

The Fish and Wildlife Department partnered with University of Vermont researchers to conduct a study of moose health and survival in WMU E. The results of this study, in which 126 moose (36 cows, 90 calves) were fitted with GPS tracking collars, clearly showed that chronic high winter tick loads have

(Fishing cont. pg 53)



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Green Mountain Report

by Bradley Carleton,
Charlotte, VT



Ok, so, April. What's so fun about mud season? If you have a lifted monster truck, you'll party with the Hanksville Mud Boppers. But other than that, the month starts out by reminding us of the dismal ice fishing season that it

spool is whining a high-pitched tone. Everyone runs over to see what it might be. We're all placing bets on a pike, a laker or a salmon. Whatever it was, it was huge! Doug played the fish like an expert for eight minutes, while I got

As the month winds down there is that dynamic tension that begins to build as turkeys strut about on the edges of fields, scouting out their prospective mates.

was! Yes, there were a few days that were fun. Like the day we caught over 200 yellow perch... and only 20 of them were over seven inches. Or the day my crew hit Kingsland Bay on the last weekend of February, and not one of us got even a bite, until...my friend Doug Hartwell from Vergennes, who is a voracious student of the sport, suddenly begins screaming a string of ebullient expletives. His hand tuned ice rod is bent in half and his

most of it on video with my phone. Finally, the fish tired and Doug was able to reel it up to the 24" deep hole. And all of us are amazed. A smallmouth bass that barely fits through the icy cylinder. Whoops and hollers are heard echoing across the frozen bay. What a way to finish! Alright, April's not that bad. There is the Glorious Second Saturday Trout Opener. This year it will fall on April 9. Please be aware of the new regulations. They are more

generous, yet still more reasonable than previous limits.

It seems like in the last decade, the flyfishing population has exploded. I attribute this to a few things. That cursedly beautiful film "A River Runs Through It," which brought this once quiet solitary sport to the attention of

chance to check this uber-cool sport off their bucket list. Come to think of it,

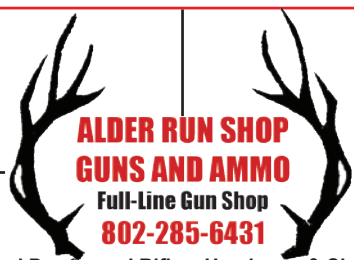
mont's Wildlife Management Unit (WMU) E in the northeastern corner of



April isn't that depressing. As the month winds down there is that dynamic tension that begins to build as turkeys strut about on the edges of fields, scouting out their prospective mates. Yeah, April is rather good after all.

The VT F&W has proposed issuing 100 moose hunting permits in Ver-

the state in order to reduce the impact of winter ticks on the moose population. The proposal was accepted by the VT F&W Board at its February 16 meeting. "Department staff, including moose project lead biologist Nick Fortin and biometrician Dr. Katherina Gieder, brought incredible scientific expertise to this recommendation," said Commissioner of Fish and Wildlife Christopher Herrick. "The proposal our board vetted and approved was informed by years of field research and sophisticated statistical analyses." The goal of the department's 2022 moose harvest recommendation is to improve the health of moose in WMU-E by reducing the number of moose and thereby reducing the abundance (Spring cont. pg 53)



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Spring

(Cont. from pg 52)

dance and impact of winter ticks. "Moose density in WMU E is still more than one moose per square mile, significantly higher than any other part of the state," said Nick Fortin, VT F&W's moose project leader. "Moose densities greater than one per square mile support high numbers of winter ticks which negatively impact moose health and survival."

Remember, VT state law requires that ice fishing shanties be removed from the ice before the ice weakens, according to the VT F&W. All shanties must be removed before the ice becomes unsafe or loses its ability to support the shanty out of the water, or before the last Sunday in March -- the 27th this year -- whichever comes first. All contents, debris, wood, and supports must also be removed so they do not

become a hazard to navigation in the spring. The fine for leaving your ice fishing shanty on the ice can be \$1,000, and shanties may not be left at state fishing access areas.

VT F&W is hosting an online seminar on "Improving Habitat for Vermont's Black Bears"

Thursday, April 7, 2022 - 12:00pm to 1:00pm. Black bears are an iconic species in Vermont. Loss of habitat is of great concern for the continued success of our black bear population. Join VT Coverts: Woodlands for Wildlife as they host Jackie Comeau, VT F&W biologist, who will share about the habitat needs of Vermont's black bears. We will discuss options to improve bear food sources in your woodlot and steps to discourage them from your backyard. Registration is required. To register please visit the VT F&W page

www.vtfishandwildlife.com/event/improving-habitat-for-vermonts-black-bears

ing-habitat-for-vermonts-black-bears.

Bradley Carleton is the founder and Executive Director of www.sacredhunter.org which teaches the public respect and empathy through hunting and fishing.

Fishing

(Cont. from pg 51)

caused the health of moose in that part of the state to be very poor. Survival of adult moose remained relatively good, but birth rates were very low and less than half of the calves survived their first winter.

The department would issue 60 either-sex moose hunting permits and 40 antlerless moose permits in WMU-E for the moose seasons this October. This is expected to result in a harvest of 51 to 65 moose, or about 5 percent of the moose population in WMU-E. The same num-

ber of permits were issued in 2021 when hunters took 62 moose.

Syndicated columnist Gary W. Moore is a life long resident of Vermont and a former Commissioner of Fish and Game. He has been a magazine freelancer and syndicated newspaper columnist for 45 years. He may be reached by e-mail at gwmooore1946@icloud.com or at Box 454, Bradford, VT 05033. copyright 2022 Gary W. Moore

Crossword Answers

Across: 2 Saponac, 6 Libby, 8 Big Brown Bat, 9 Hungarian, 14 Poodle, 15 Three, 16 Ruddy.

Down: 1 Sunfish, 3 Palm Warbler, 4 Coyote, 5 Ribbon, 7 Bobcat, 10 Upper, 11 Goose, 12 Coot, 13 Lily.

Harvesting

(Cont. from pg 50)

Maybe when I talk about a future garden I'll say, "Hey, I think it's time I killed some tomatoes, some carrots." Sounds ridiculous, right? But no more ridiculous than this pathetic attempt to soften what it is we do in the woods.

Maybe you harvest your deer. But no amount of using soft language will change what it is that I do when I enter the deer and turkey woods. Not me. I'm going to continue to kill every deer that I kill.

Dennis Jensen is a freelance writer. Contact him at d.jensen62@yahoo.com



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Fly Fish

(Cont. from pg 44)

to come with practice, but after believing that a sportsman needed years of meditation and guidance from monks in a Tibetan monastery in order to cast a fly line, I was amazed at how simple and intuitive it turned out to be.

A few weeks later, I was in a motorized canoe anchored in the quiet but implacable current of the Miramichi River. We'd been fishing there for a few days, and no one was catching anything. Ultimately, I didn't really care—the experience was

fun, and almost majestically hypnotic in its rhythms of cast, and retrieve over and over again. It was so slow my guide had his rod out as well, hoping to hook up with *something* and to hand off the rod to me. But then—**BAM!**

My rod jolted so hard I still wonder how I held on to it. I've likened the experience holding the rod out the window of a speeding car and then having the hook catch a telephone pole. It took about ten minutes of fighting to wrestle the nearly thirty-inch long hen salmon to the side of the boat, where the guide gingerly unhooked

it, I touched it briefly, and with a slap of her tail, she went sliding back into the current.

Looking out the window at those folks with the fly rod, that memory from twenty-five years ago comes rushing back. I think it's time to learn another new skill.



Matt Dunlap is a sportsman from Old Town and is a periodic co-host on Maine Outdoors, heard statewide every Sunday night at 7:00 pm on WVOM 103.9 FM, WVQM 101.3 FM, and 1450 AM in Rockland.



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Maine Tails

By Jonah Paris,
Scarborough, ME

If you're like me, wearing mismatched socks doesn't bother you. You tolerate losing your seat on the couch to a spoiled hound. You spill your morning coffee on your shirt, and curse because now you have to make another cup. Without a second thought, you cast your Jitterbug into the lily pads,

one leg is longer or shorter than the other; if you meant to use red thread, but used black, or if you meant to use black, but used red. A flexible, "good-enough" attitude, at least for this fly tier, does not exist.

I became fully conscious of this tendency the other evening while pawing through my fly boxes. The

remind myself that the fisherman ought to give the fish a fair chance to judge his or her flies. And every once in a while, the fisherman might be surprised at the fish's verdict, as I learned one April afternoon while fishing Grand Lake Stream.

It was still dark when my friend, Sully, and I pulled into the parking lot below the dam in Grand Lake Stream a few years back. Already the lot was full, not surprising con-

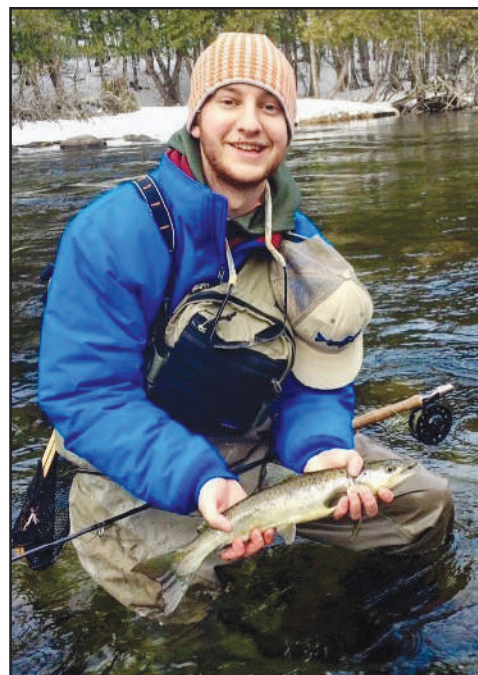
A Fish's Verdict

downstream.

I tied on a streamer and started casting. Then I tied on another streamer at our next spot. Working my way through my box, I found a homely looking excuse for a fly - one

a humorously oversized, conical black thread head. And, of course, we can't forget the unraveling tinsel hanging off the shank of the hook.

Out of desperation, I tied it on and let the current swing the fly out. Once taut downstream, I began slowly stripping it back. On the third strip, I set the hook into something - a rock was my first guess. A short time later, I netted a scraggly landlocked salmon. As it would turn out, my salmon (taken on what was then promoted to a "secret fly pattern") turned out to be the only fish of the day for all of the seven other anglers I spoke



The author with an early season Grand Lake Stream salmon.

(Photo courtesy of Jonah Paris.)

even though only one rusty prong of the front treble remains. If you forget to defrost venison steaks for dinner, you quickly settle for a can of tomato soup.

But, if you tie a fly and a few hairs, a piece of fur, a strand of tinsel, or a wrap of chenille, is out of place, you immediately reach for the scissors and rid the hook - and the world - of your unworthy creation. You will destroy your fly if the thread head is too big or too small; if the hair stacks unevenly or too evenly; if the dubbing body doesn't taper enough or tapers too much; if the pupils of the painted eyes are too big or too small; if

realization came slowly; for someone who has tied as many flies as I have, and seems to never find enough time to fish with those flies, my boxes were looking awfully slim. Meanwhile, the blades on my tying scissors were shockingly dull. In my mind, each of my creations will be scrutinized by a wise, old trout or salmon, then pass the test as my rod arches and line comes screaming off the reel.

In reality, most of my flies are destined for some just-out-of-reach branch or submerged log. Yet, even with this knowledge, I remain the unsettling, harsh critic. I need to repeatedly

sidering it was a Sunday morning and Maine's open water season had commenced the day prior. Anglers were sipping coffee at their trucks, stepping into waders, and piecing rods together. Looking down over the bank, I could already see the silhouettes of fishermen lined up shoulder to shoulder in the Dam Pool. I overheard a conversation from across the parking lot. "They weren't biting much yesterday - and the only ones taken were in the Dam Pool on Golden Retrievers." Acknowledging that we'd rather get skunked than fish in a crowd, Sully and I began fishing our way

which had somehow avoided the scissors. If I held out the streamer far enough, squinted my eyes until they were nearly shut, and looked over my left shoulder, the fly might have resembled the result of a love affair between a smelt and a dace. Or, to a less imaginative eye, the fly looked like a few kinked strands of brown over white bucktail, a roughly trimmed red bucktail throat, and

to. Sometimes, just sometimes, we must let the fish be the judge of our flies.

Jonah Paris teaches English at a small high school in Southwestern Maine. A four-season outdoorsman, Jonah lives in Gorham, ME with his girlfriend, Ashley, and beagle, Aurora. Jonah can be reached at jonaheparis@gmail.com

I need to repeatedly remind myself that the fisherman ought to give the fish a fair chance to judge his or her flies. And every once in a while, the fisherman might be surprised at the fish's verdict...

NORTH AMERICA'S OUTDOOR ADVENTURES

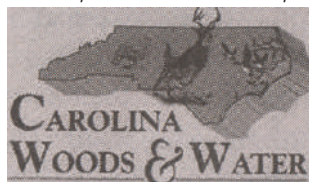
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Operation Game Thief

The intentional misuse and blatant disregard for Maine's fish and game laws is the reason the Maine Warden Service was formed over 140 years ago. The people of Maine realized that if unregulated poaching continued, we would have nothing left for resources. Poaching still continues today, and I'm sure everyone reading this article can think of someone or a group of people that do not always toe the line when hunting or fishing. Without concerned citizens calling to report wildlife crimes, the job of a Warden would be much more difficult.

A Warden cannot be everywhere and see everything, especially with such a large geographical area and only 90 field Wardens to do this job. This brings us to the important role that you as a member of the sporting public play in protecting wildlife in Maine.

Maine's Operation Game Thief (OGT) program began in 1989, when Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Commissioner, and former Maine Warden Service Colonel, Bill Vail traveled to Texas and heard about the success of the Operation Game Thief program in the "Lonestar State". Commissioner Vail returned to Maine with the goal of launching a similar program, intent on providing a hotline that would provide compensation for information that would lead to the successful apprehension of poachers around the State.

Since 1989, the OGT program has continued to grow and evolve, today being an invaluable tool and resource for not

only the Maine Warden Service, but also the Maine Marine Patrol. Maine's Operation Game Thief hotline is a tremendous asset to our Department and has provided information that has led to countless major cases over the last three decades for the Maine Warden Service. OGT also supports the Maine Warden Service and Maine Marine Patrol through donations of equipment necessary to carry out our mission more effectively. Many of you have likely seen the "Wall of Shame" trailers that are a popular attraction at local sportsman shows and fairs. These trailers have been donated by OGT and show adjudicated cases of poaching from all around the State that have been made, due in large part to the public's support to end poaching.

I have recently become involved with Maine Operation Game Thief in hopes of growing the program's outreach in Aroostook County. As a Warden in Aroostook County, I know that violations are occurring, but compared to the rest of the State, relatively few are reported or called into Operation

Game Thief. I believe that one of the reasons that fewer calls are received from Aroostook County has to do with the small communities and fear of being revealed as the person who came forth with information. It is important to remember that OGT is completely anonymous and that no names are ever used before, during and after these investigations.

Maine's Operation Game Thief (OGT) program began in 1989, when Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Commissioner, and former Maine Warden Service Colonel, Bill Vail traveled to Texas and heard about the success of the Operation Game Thief program in the "Lonestar State".

I have spoken with many "poachers" both before and after I became a Warden, and I am always interested to ask them about violations that they would never commit. It is interesting to me, that even amongst the population who does not hold fish and game laws in the highest regard, there is a "code of ethics" that they follow. For example, one individual who I have talked with many times has killed moose and deer out of season, but becomes infuriated when others do so only to leave the ani-

mal behind to waste. This "poacher" has been caught for many serious violations in the past, but will share information when he hears about someone shooting and leaving big game to waste. Some poachers have shared with me that they

Warden's Words

by Game Warden
Kale O'Leary,
Ashland, ME



options to show support on the OGT website along with contact information, past cases and other important information.

Maine residents can call the toll-free OGT hotline at 1-800-ALERT-US and non-residents can call

1-207-287-6057 to report violations. These calls will be fielded by an operator, where you as the complainant can remain anonymous. If you would like more information about OGT in Aroostook County, feel free to reach out to me directly at kale.oleary@maine.gov

If you value the hunting and fishing opportunities that we have in Maine and want these opportunities to continue for future generations, I encourage you to report violations and to become involved with the Operation Game Thief Program. There are many

"Kale O'Leary is a Maine Game Warden who covers the Oxbow/Masardis district in central Aroostook County. He has been a Game Warden for over 6 years and lives in Ashland."

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Women In The Woods

by Erin Merrill,
Portland, ME

As turkey season gets ready to start next month, now is a critical time to check all of your hunting gear – if, like me, you didn't do it at the end of the season last year.

Clothing – Normally, I am pretty good about the

during your hunt.

Packs – Without fail, when I open my pack to get ready for next season, there are protein bar wrappers, possibly an empty water bottle and clothes that needed to get washed. It's really quite disgusting.

Make sure your boots are in good shape, that there is no duct tape patching up small holes or leaks. We know a good pair of boots is worth the money so if you need them, order them now!

wear and tear of my hunting layers but I grabbed one of my go-to hunting shirts and slid my arms through the sleeves. On my right hand, the fabric that should have completed the circle around my thumb was down to a few thin threads. Yikes! Checking your clothes for holes, rips and tears will ensure you are dry and comfortable

But, as hunting season starts back up, doing a thorough emptying and reorganizing will come in handy. Hand warmers and feet warmers may seem like an unnecessary thing to pack but when you head out to bear hunt and temps drop a little, you will be glad that you packed them. The same is true about bug spray, water bottle, first aid

Hunting Season: You Ready?

kit and I always throw in a couple plastic bags and food storage bags. An extra pair of gloves and a balaclava are also must haves for any season!

Boots – I went on a trip once and as we were headed out, I saw a chunk of black rubber on the

the money so if you need them, order them now! Or if you are like me and sit during deer season, I recommend snowmobile boots. They have extra insulation which helps if you sit for the entire day.

Accessories – Spring launches us full bore into

Guns and ammunition are easier things to look over, clean, oil and ensure you are prepared for the hunt. Ammunition is in short supply so if you think you may need more (you always need more) pick up an extra box or two the next time you are at a store.

Being prepare (or not) can make or break your hunt. It is better to carry more than enough and not have to worry then to be in the woods and in need of something you should have packed. What are your must-haves to either put in your pack or carry with you every time you go out hunting?



The best time to review your hunt gear is before the hunt, not after opening day.
(Photo by V. Paul Reynolds)

flood. When I looked at my boots, I realized that the sole was so worn down that it was falling off my boots. Don't be me! Make sure your boots are in good shape, that there is no duct tape patching up small holes or leaks. We know a good pair of boots is worth

tick season. Make sure your clothes and boots have a fresh coating of permethrin! If you use tech like digital calls or ear pieces like Grizzly Ears, make sure they are charged and ready to go. I also carry a backup cell phone charger just in case.

Erin is a member of the POMA and the New England Outdoor Writers Association. She is a senior writer for Drury Outdoors' DeerCast and is the President and co-Founder of the non-profit group Women of the Maine Outdoors. You can read about Erin's adventures and contact her at www.andastrongcupofcoffee.com

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Tying Material

Wool and Synthetic Yarns – can be used for tails and bodies of many popular fly patterns. Those that are fished deep are generally tied with wool yarn that absorbs water and will sink more rapidly than a synthetic polypropylene yarn that is better suited for a floating pattern like the Grasshopper. It is essential that yarns be tied down over the entire hook shank to at least two eye widths behind the eye to provide a smooth base for a wrapped body material and then

Floss should be wrapped so that the strands lie flat side by side with no abrupt bunches. A tapered body can be formed by gradually increasing the amount of overlap as the floss is wrapped.

bound down around the hook back to the barb. At that point the piece of yarn which extends to the rear can be clipped as a tail or wrapped for a body in tight consecutive turns around the hook, tied off behind the eye with several firm turns of thread, clipped and further bound down. As with all bodies, adequate space should be left behind the eye for wing, throat or hackle materials.

Floss – Most floss is made from either rayon or nylon filaments that are available in single or multiple strands. I prefer the four strand because it can be tied much smoother and faster than single strand. If

bodies for smaller flies are needed, the four strands can be divided prior to tying. Floss is delicate and the filaments can fray or easily pull apart if too much pressure is exerted when tying. It is helpful to moisten floss prior to wrapping which keep the fibers intact. Floss is applied in a manner similar to yarn except that it is double wrapped to provide the proper thickness and taper for the body. Tie it in behind the eye, wrap back to the beginning of the tail and forward to its original tie in point. Floss should be wrapped so that the strands lie flat side by side with no abrupt bunches. A tapered body can be formed by gradually increasing the amount of overlap as the floss is wrapped.

Tinsel – is a double sided mylar material, silver on one side, gold on the other, and comes in several widths usually designated as size 10 (the

widest) thru sizes 16-18 for smaller flies. It can be used for spiral ribbing as well as complete tinsel bodies that are formed with continuous side by side wrappings. It is important again that a smooth uniform base be provided to eliminate bumps or ridges in the wound tinsel. This can be accomplished by tight wraps of thread from behind the eye back to the hook barb and then forward to the eye. If a thicker body is desired, a smooth underbody of floss can be used. I prefer to match the color of floss as closely as possible to the color of the tinsel, e.g. white floss and thread for silver, and yellow floss and thread for gold.

Continuous tinsel bodies should be tied in behind the eye and tightly wrapped side by side or slightly overlapped back to the hook barb and wrapped forward again to the eye creating a double layer. When initially tying in,

Fly Fishing

by Joe Bertolaccini, Orrington, ME



place the desired color against the hook and fold it over to begin wrapping. Many streamer patterns like the Mickey Finn also call for an evenly spaced ribbing of oval tinsel over the body to add flash as well as to disguise imperfections in the underlying flat tinsel. Oval tinsel has a thread core, about 1/2 inch should be stripped off prior to tying on above the barb to eliminate a bump at

the rear of the hook. Coat the entire tinsel body with head cement to increase its durability.

Next month we will be concentrating on tubular bodies.



Joe has enjoyed fly fishing for over 65 years. His book, Fundamentals of Fly Fishing, is now available. He can be reached at: brewerberts@aol.com

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Against The Current

by Bob Romano,
Rangeley, ME

Most of you may know Randy Spencer from reading his column in the Northwoods Sporting Journal. Many, I'm sure, have read the award-winning author's reminiscences found in his previous two books, each named the Best Book of the Year by the New England Outdoor

of features on CBS Sunday Morning, Boston Channel 5's Chronicle, The Wall Street Journal and ESPN2.

In his recently published book, WRITTEN ON WATER, you'll find a collection of stories based upon those told to him and others of his own. Guiding out of Grand Lake Stream,

In his recently published book, WRITTEN ON WATER, you'll find a collection of stories based upon those told to him and others of his own. Guiding out of Grand Lake Stream, there is no one better to carry on this oral tradition.

Writers Association. Still, others may know him from listening to the songs that can be found on his many CDs. If you've ever been to the small town of Grand Lake Stream (population 125 +/-) you will be sure to run across him or someone who can point in his direction. The Master Maine Guide has been the subject

there is no one better to carry on this oral tradition. What Sydney Lea, another of my favorite New England writers, did for the folks of northern Vermont in A NORTH COUNTRY LIFE, Randy has accomplished for the residents in this small town located in Down East Maine. Writing with the knowledge ac-

quired by a keen observer of the natural world and the patient ear of a good listener, Randy Spencer weaves tales you'll not soon forget. He captures the dark beauty of northern Maine, one touched with melancholy as well as majesty while introducing the reader to those independent, and at times lost souls—men and women who find refuge in those places “back of beyond.”

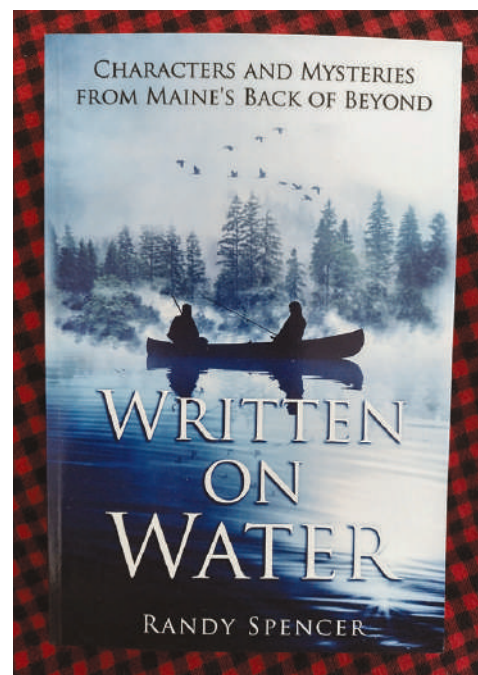
Having tramped the trails, waded the runs, and paddled the lakes that dominate the northeast corner of the Pine Tree State for well-over twenty years, Randy Spencer is the perfect messenger to bring these dispatches to those of us “from away.” In WRITTEN ON WATER, the Master Maine Guide tells the stories of those characters who so often populate small-town America. There's “the old cowboy” who is relegated to a wheelchair and even-

tually his bed as a result of COPD. Not one to complain, he spends his days listening to a collection of country tapes that would make Ken Burns drool. According to Randy, these were “not the cookie-cut-

verbal outbursts are caused by Tourettes. With the help of Rizzie, who suffers from Schizophrenia, the two spend a season selling hot dogs and “landlocked” burgers to sports out of a broken-down camper they

rescued from the town dump, adding an awning made from a canvas boat cover.

The Mighty Finn has “the metabolism of a titmouse.” All legs, he wears his pants hitched inches above his waist. Although his attempts to ride a moose end in failure, he is loved by the widows in town for whom he does



ter kind...churned out by Nashville by the latest pretty face under a big Stetson.” No, the old cowboy was more interested in Bob Wells, Buck Owens, Hank Snow, and Merle Haggard rather than those wannabes he describes as “All hat and no cattle.”

In one story, we meet Jumpy, whose twitches and

odd jobs, content with a bag of Doritos in lieu of pay.

In another story, we learn that the little hamlet of Grand Lake Stream does not have a police department and is governed by three “assessors” with each rotating the honor of first assessor, a position similar to that of mayor. One such “first ass” as the townspeople christened him, puts an ad in a downstate newspaper for a spouse. When he returns with a half-his-age, bride-to-be, the local rumor-mill is all abuzz. But the real mystery is what she might be carrying in that black purse that never leaves her side.

While chronicling the lives of long-time residents, Randy does not leave out the sports who travel to their community to cast their lures for the region's bass or troll streamers for (Water cont. pg 67)

Maine Sporting Art



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RIVER FLOWERS



RIVER FLOWERS - by Robert J. Romano, Jr.

"Lyrical, poignant, and sometimes fantastical angling tales from the Maine woods and beyond, written in the great storytelling tradition of Sparse Gray Hackle and Robert Traver..." Stephen Sautner, author of A Cast in the Woods and Fish On. Fish Off.

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Trained Retrieve...Part 1

To properly train this fetch command, you need a training table. It can be done on the ground but the training becomes harder. Since the trainer will be using their hands to teach this command, there must be a method of restraining the pup. Also, you must have

pup's ear. No pinching. After each short session, award with a treat. We want the pup to look forward to having their ear touched because a treat follows. This is learning through association: touching ear produces a treat. Also, the pup becomes familiar with

open the dogs mouth. This is why it's good to have a restraining device attached to the table. If you need to use your left hand to open the dog's mouth, put your left hand over the dog's muzzle. Press your thumb on the right side of the mouth and index finger on the left side of the mouth and press against the teeth until the mouth opens. Then place your hand, with glove, in the mouth. Don't jam or heavily force your hand into the mouth. The mouth will open with gently persuasion. Softly, say "fetch". After a few seconds, simply remove your hand and say, with enthusiasm, "good girl" (or boy). And then reward with a treat. As with most of our training, we like three repetitions with a session. Important: At this stage, never scold for a mistake. Only praise for a job well done. A substitute for the hand in leather glove approach would be to use a wooden dowel.

Step 3: This is a new session and a continuation of Step 2. However, you can no longer use your left hand to open the dog's mouth. Your left hand remains on the collar and



On Point

by Paul Fuller,
Durham, N.H.



The proper ear pinch hold for Force Fetch.

a collar on the dog. Each Step is a session. Each session has three repetitions. If the dog is not overly stressed, two sessions per day, separated by three or four hours, is permissible. Remember our theme in this book...love and understand your dog.

Step 1: Over a one-week period, on the training table, hold the puppies collar while touching the

the training table.

Step 2: This is the hand in mouth drill. You might say this is the real starting point for force fetch training. At this age, a pup's teeth are usually sharp. A leather glove is suggested. With left hand, hold the dog's collar. Insert right hand (in glove) into the pup's mouth. You may have to let go of the collar with your left hand to

delivers the ear pinch. No need to double up the ear for the pinch. The pinch is about half way between the end of the ear and the ear canal. Your thumb is on the underside of the ear. Pinch with your thumb and forefinger. The remaining three fingers hold the collar. Here's the sequence. Lightly pinch the ear. Insert the right hand with glove in

dog to reach for the glove with the ear pinch. Initially, we are only looking for a slight movement toward the glove. **Note: Reaching for the glove is a big step.** To encourage the reach for the glove, hesitate briefly after the pinch and before putting the glove in the mouth. Again, three repetitions with a session. Extend each repetition by three to

This is the hand in mouth drill. You might say this is the real starting point for force fetch training. At this age, a pup's teeth are usually sharp. A leather glove is suggested.

the mouth and simultaneously, say softly "fetch". Release pinch as soon as your hand is in the mouth. Then quickly remove the glove while saying "drop". Some use "out" but I like "drop". This sequence is pressure on then pressure off. Pressure on means take the glove and pressure off is the reward for taking the glove. I then give the additional reward of a treat. Eventually, with pressure on, we want the

four seconds. Stop if your dog pants which is a sign of stress.

Next month's column will be Part 2 of teaching the trained retrieve.



Paul Fuller and his wife Susan are co-hosts of *Bird Dogs Afield TV*. Past episodes are available on his website: www.bird-dogsafeld.com Contact: paul@birddogsafeld.com

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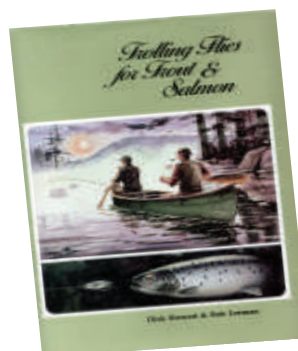
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(SEE PAGE 49)

At long last, revived from the archives of the once-authoritative books on New England streamer flies and how to use them: ***Trolling Flies for Trout & Salmon***, by Dick Stewart and Bob Leeman.



\$21.95

Trolling Flies for Trout and Salmon was first published in 1982 and again in 1992. There were 350 signed Limited Edition hardcover copies and several thousand hard and soft cover copies sold out with the two printings. Many fly tyers view this book as an up-to-date version of new and available streamer fly patterns and crave to have it in their library. Used copies have been selling on AmazonBooks.com for the last few years with a price tag up to \$300.00 for each copy! There are 125 pages with 32 color plates of more than 90 classic streamer flies and tying recipes from a Winnepesaukee Smelt to a Barney Google and a Rangeley Centennial. Leeman and Stewart also share with readers many tips and tactics for trolling streamer flies for trout and salmon throughout New England.

"This wonderful fishing book is the gospel when it comes to streamer flies and trolling tactics. A Classic!"

— V. Paul Reynolds, Editor, *Northwoods Sporting Journal*

Send a check for \$24.95 (\$21.95 & \$3.00 postage) along with this ad, to: Bob Leeman, 22 Alan-A-Dale Rd., Brewer, ME 04412. (Price covers shipping and handling).

Maine Outdoor Publications





Anticosti

by Mark Cote,
Rumford, ME

Although it seems like I always say this, the 2021 season was one I will always remember. Everyone in our camp fit in like family, which is one of the most important factors for a good trip. Yes, we all go there with high hopes of bagging a trophy buck, but

a personal level.

I always enjoy taking someone new to see what I consider my world. Inevitably, they are awe struck by the beauty of the landscape. The cliffs, canyons, and rivers so crystal clear they resemble glacial flows, always captivate even the

Yes, we all go there with high hopes of bagging a trophy buck, but the camp experience can make or break the best of hunting experiences.

the camp experience can make or break the best of hunting experiences.

This year, I had the honor of having our very own V. Paul Reynolds as my guest in our camp. For as long as I can remember, I have been reading his columns in various publications. We communicate regularly on a professional level concerning the stories he publishes in the Northwoods Journal, but it was nice to get to know him on

most seasoned woodsmen.

Paul has done more than his share of hunts. His stories of elk hunts where he packed all his gear on his back and slept on the ground for a week prove he is a passionate hunter. I looked forward to hunting with him, hoping to learn as much as I could from his experiences.

I wish I had a dime for every time he said how impressed he was with things, especially while talking

about the volume of deer he saw. Every evening we all looked forward for him to return to camp. Before he even got his boots off, he would give his report of how many deer he saw and what he considered shooters. He reeked of confidence as he relived his day for us.

I don't remember what day of the hunt it was, but Paul returned to camp with a dandy! It was a mainframe ten point that was missing his brow tines, making it an eight. It had everything... the mass, the width...everything but brow tines, but a trophy just the same.

That was the same day I took my two bucks. After seeing his, although I was happy for him, my hopes of winning the "Biggest Buck" pool waned.

A day or two later, Paul was hunting from a blind in a swamp that historically produces pool winning deer. When he came back to camp, we



The author's campmate, V. Paul Reynolds, with his Anticosti buck.
(Photo by Mark Cote)



The bog on Anticosti Island where the Reynolds buck was taken. Note the "shooting shack" off in the distance.
(Photo by V. Paul Reynolds)

were all eagerly waiting for the play-by-play report

of his day.

I can remember it vividly. He took his hat off at the door, and with it still in his hand, he opened with, "I messed up fellas."

"Oh oh...what happened?" one of us asked.

"I missed a huge deer that had to be three hundred yards away. I don't know what happened, I had a good rest, I took my time, but I just plain missed him. I don't know why." He confessed.

He went on to explain where it came from, what direction it was going, how he was acting, and where it was when he took the shot. (Deer Camp cont. pg 64)

Just released... Volume II of A Maine Deer Hunter's Logbook. This is a vastly expanded version of the first book, which has been a big seller. A full 181

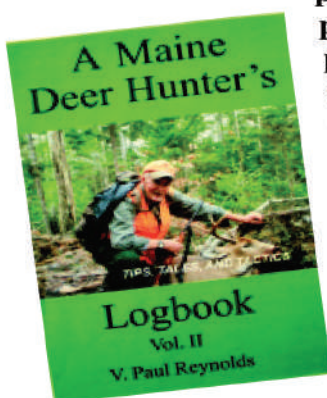
pages, this new volume is packed with many more photos, practical tips, tales, and tactics on how to outwit the wary Maine White-tail.

"We hunters need more books like this. In clear, good-humored prose, Reynolds entertains, informs and captures the essence of the whitetail experience."

-Dan Aadland, *The Best of All Seasons: Fifty Years as a Montana Deer Hunter.*

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-John Holyoke, *Bangor Daily News outdoor writer*



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Finding the Cure



Lake Trout can be a better table fish than you might think. Brining and smoking is a good way to go.

I have always sought after out-of-the-box ideas to enjoy my fish and game in unique ways.

Recently, I was talking with a good friend of mine here in Maine about his son's success while ice fishing. He sent me pictures of his son holding up his

first lake trout.

After sending congratulations, I naturally asked what his plans were for cooking those beautiful trout, thinking he may want some suggestions. He shared that the fish were released as they did not have a desire to eat them.

I sighed, as I have not had lake trout in quite some time, and I was envisioning ways that those fish could be enjoyed.

While you can grill or bake lake trout filets, one method that you may not have thought of is to make gravlax with your lake trout.

Gravlax is made using an age-old preservation curing process that trans-

While you can grill or bake lake trout filets, one method that you may not have thought of is to make gravlax with your lake trout.

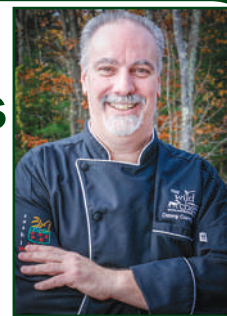
forms the flavor and texture of your fish. It generally involves subjecting your fish to fermentation, pickling, salting, smoking, or some combination of these before it is consumed.

Picture things you are familiar with such as Lox with salmon, or pickled herring.

The method is not meant for all types of fish. It works best with fish that have some type of natural fat such as lake trout, arctic char or salmon. Lake trout

Cookin' With New England's WildCheff

by Denny Corriveau, Kennebunkport, ME



possesses unsaturated fat known as omega-3 fatty acid, which lends itself well to this process.

The technique of curing fatty fish can impart beautiful flavor so it can be enjoyed in an amazing way.

Here's how it works:

fully cured, the gravlax will darken in color and be firm to the touch at the thickest part.

Fish is very porous and takes on flavor easily, so it will absorb the flavor of the cure that you apply to the fish. You can customize the aromatics with your favorite herbs, spices, and chosen ingredients.

It is important to always have an appreciation for making the most of what you are blessed to receive from nature. It may sound a bit cliché to refer to it as "God's grocery store," but that is truly how I feel. It is easy to overlook the fact that God knew what He was doing when he created fish species in the water and the game we find in the field. They are there for us to observe, but they

(Cure cont. pg 64)

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Deer Camp

(Cont. from pg 62)

It didn't seem to bother him that bad, it was more matter of fact than anything. It proved to me that even a legend can be human.

He ended the week with his two deer and a bag full of memories that I hope were as special to him as they were to me. I look forward to our next adventure.

For more information on an Anticosti adventure of your own, call my friends on the reservation desk at 1-800-463-0863. Tell them Mark sent you!

As always, I welcome your thoughts at Anticosti-Mark@gmail.com

Subscribe Today!

Cure

(Cont. from pg 62)

are also a great sustainable option for our table.

This unique approach for lake trout may have you rethinking how you utilize this natural resource.

WildCheff's Lake Trout Gravlax

Ingredients

2 lb. lake trout filets
6 T of kosher salt
2 T of pure cane sugar
2 Tsp. of juniper berry
2 bunches of fresh dill

Directions

In a food processor, pulse and combine the salt, sugar and juniper berry.

Place trout filets (skin side down) on a large cookie sheet that is covered in plastic wrap.

Sprinkle the cure mixture and distribute the dill evenly over the top of the

flesh.

Now wrap the filets snugly with plastic wrap so they are well sealed.

Place another sheet pan on top of the wrapped fish and weigh the top pan down with something like bricks to apply a bit of pressure to the wrapped fish.

Place into refrigerator, turning every 6-8 hours. After 24-36 hours, discard the dill and gently rinse under cold water, and then pat dry.

Store uncovered in refrigerator for 2-3 days to air dry before serving.

To serve, you can enjoy many variations – slice thin and enjoy with a home charcuterie board or thinly slice and place atop a bagel and cream cheese, along with pickled onion and capers. Other ideas are to serve on top of small pieces of toasted artisan bread

and topped with a dollop of plain yogurt that you have infused with lemon and horseradish, sprinkled with chives.

About the author: *WildCheff* - Denny Coriveau is award-winning National Game Chef, Metis First Nation Chef, and the Founder of the Free-Range Culinary Institute, the only

national wild game cooking school in the country. As a Wild Game Evangelist and trendsetter for wild game culinary arts - Denny is a nationally recognized authority concerning the culinary side of wild game. You can learn more @ www.wildcheff.com or visit him on Instagram @ [thewildcheff](https://www.instagram.com/thewildcheff) or Facebook at @WildCheff



Jonathan Bowman, 15, with his first buck.

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Lincoln Sparrows



The Lincoln Sparrow named after a Downeast Mainer.

Every May I search for various species of sparrows on my property. It is easy to lump all sparrows together and say “it looked like a sparrow”. But when I identify Lincoln’s Sparrows, I feel a real sense of accomplishment. They are skulkers, keeping out of sight.

I look along my wood piles, stone walls and leafy thickets. Sometimes I locate them by hearing their sweet bubbling and melodious songs. I then use the birder’s trick of kissing the back of my hand to make a sound which often draws them out of hiding. If I did not examine the field marks

carefully, I can make the mistake of saying they are Song Sparrows. Both species do have streaked breasts. But Lincoln’s have distinctive buffy bands across theirs and the Songs have a much larger and central breast spot..

I enjoy finding the secretive Lincoln’s for another reason. It was named after an ornithologist who lived in DownEast Maine in the nearby town of Dennysville. His name was Thomas Lincoln. On June 4, 1833, he boarded the schooner Ripley in Eastport, Maine. He was joining America’s then fore-

most ornithologist John James Audubon on an expedition to find new species of birds along the coasts of Nova Scotia, Cape Breton and the shores of southern Quebec.

Near the mouth of the Natashquan River in

Maine birders today don’t realize it was named after a fellow DownEast Maine bird enthusiast who lived years ago.



Karen Holmes resides in Cooper, Maine. She is a citizen scientist/natu-

I enjoy finding the secretive Lincoln’s for another reason. It was named after an ornithologist who lived in DownEast Maine in the nearby town of Dennysville.

Quebec, they heard an unfamiliar bird song. Lincoln was able to kill and “collect” the bird. After a careful study, Audubon declared it was a new species. It ended up being the only one found during the expedition. In his honor, Audubon named it “Tom’s finch” and later the Lincoln’s Sparrow. Many DownEast

ralist who volunteers for many wildlife projects. After recovering from hip replacement surgery during the winter, she is looking forward to being able to roam the woods and fields again of DownEast Maine. She again will be the coordinator of the Washington County, Maine Annual Loon Count in July.



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In these troubled and divisive times for our country, we at the Northwoods Sporting Journal remain proud to be Americans. We still stand for the National Anthem and thank our lucky stars that we live in the land of the free.

And we still salute our military men and women, who have served and continue to serve their country, here at home and in faraway lands. To them we owe our gratitude and appreciation for what they do, and for safeguarding our American way of life, which we value deeply.

As a way of saying thank you, we make the digital versions of the Northwoods Sporting Journal past and current - available online to service people around the world. If you have a loved one or friend now serving on active duty in Iraq or Afghanistan, or anywhere else, please let them know that they have free access to our digital magazines at: www.sportingjournal.com



Mass Wanderings

by David Willette,
N. Adams, MA

Toby Tomah hesitated for a very brief moment when the coyote popped out onto the ice the other day. “At first I thought that it was a dog, but then I quickly changed my mind and brought up my shotgun”, Toby said. “I was raised to take every legal shot at coyotes that I can.”

The collared coyote in question was one of 15 coyotes that were trapped and collared this past fall by wildlife biologist John H. Sewell and some local professional trappers for a study by the Passamaquoddy Tribe in Downeast Maine. This coyote study is the first of its kind in Maine and it has many objectives. “It’s pretty cutting edge for the Northeast”, Sewell said. “I can’t recall any other state doing this kind of coyote research.” This coyote study is in conjunction with a deer study started by the tribe in 2017, where the tribe collared 49 deer.

The Passamaquoddy

Tribe received a grant to start the coyote study. “We wanted to see if coyotes from out of the area followed deer into the deer wintering yard. At this point it appears that coyotes will follow deer to the wintering areas. We’ve found that these transient coyotes will stop and cluster around a food source on

tolerate coyotes migrating to the deer yard,” Sewell said. “It’s too early to tell if this is true. To date five collared coyotes have been killed- three by bait hunters and two by hound hunters. These coyotes are typically dispersers, and have likely been killed due to their unfamiliarity with their new territory.

“We darted 49 deer over three winters,” Sewell said. “The Passamaquoddy Tribe is trying to see how far deer will travel to get

The Passamaquoddy Tribe received a grant to start the coyote study. “We wanted to see if coyotes from out of the area followed deer into the deer wintering yard. At this point it appears that coyotes will follow deer to the wintering areas.”

their way here. Sometimes its small game, or a brain worm moose carcass, but it also can be apples and even acorns. We collared four coyotes locally and the 11 other coyotes were from outside the area. Toby Tomah’s coyote traveled roughly 20 miles before it was killed.”

The other objective of this study is to see if the resident coyotes tolerated these transient coyotes invading their turf. “Literature suggests that dominant resident coyotes would not

to the tribal deer wintering yard, which encompasses nearly 12,000 acres. Our findings were remarkable. Most deer traveled an average of 17 miles, some traveled 40 miles and we had one deer from up West of Ashland that traveled 122 miles, as the crow flies. (That deer in particular was found dead this past year. It appears that the doe died while mating). All in all the Passamaquoddy deer wintering yard draws deer from over 300 square miles.

Chasing Collared Coyotes

Another objective of the study is the feasibility to capture fawns with clustered doe GPS locations. “This is a little bit harder to accomplish due to the secretive nature of the birthing areas, per se,” Sewell said. “We have breeding does collared and we can

gether, but for the first few weeks of its birth, we can’t locate it and that’s when the fawn is most vulnerable”. To date there have been 19 deer killed out of the 49 that were tagged. Three were harvested legally by hunters, three were killed by predation, eight were



Justin Socobasin after placing a collar on a trapped coyote. (Photo by Dave Willette)

follow where they go to give birth but many times we have the location of the doe, but the doe may be 100 yards away from her fawn and we can’t find the fawn because they blend in well and there’s usually some thicker vegetation to deal with. We can find the fawn after a few weeks because the fawn is more apt to be with the doe, and we can see the two or three deer to-

hit by cars and then some single random acts took the rest.

By the way, Toby Tomah has taken his second collared coyote, and he didn’t hesitate this time.



David Willette is the author of the book, “Coyote Wars”. He can be contacted at coyote_wars@gmail.com

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(Cont. from pg 60)
its salmon. There's Vinnie Lobosco. With a last name like that, you know he's one of my favorites. Year after year, Vinnie drives nine hours from a town in New Jersey located not far from my home in the northwest corner of the state, appreciative of his time spent on the lake and river, and Carter Dodge, the

Madison Avenue advertising executive, who throws it all away to live among the birch and pine.

Randy's admiration and affection for the folks residing in and around Grand Lake Stream comes through in this latest collection of tales as does his knowledge of the region. In many of these stories, he takes us with him as he guides his sports. While motoring his Grand Laker

up West Grand Lake, he describes how the caretakers of Munson Island continue to cut ice from the lake, burying the chunks in sawdust to be used over the summer to cool the drinks of their guests. Stopping at The Narrows, he slows down to point out a calf moose, and at Coffin Point, named after the man whose

barge capsized in a sudden storm, drowning the harvester of the hemlock he'd been carrying to the nearby tannery.

Are these stories true? You'll have to be the judge, but I'd say they're as true as can be expected when handed down verbally from one generation to another. Whatever your opinion, be

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careful, for after reading this fine collection, you too may decide to chuck it all and spend the remainder of your days among the small-town characters that populate the pages of Randy's newest book. WRITTEN ON WATER can be purchased from Amazon or by going to Randy's website: randyspencer.com



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Grand Falls- This cabin was landed on this lot two years ago and ready to finish off and use. This 41 acre lot sits high on a hill with great views on **Lord Brook Rd.** ATV and snowsled from this location. Take a look. \$79,000



Mt Chase- Two quaint cabins with picturesque trout pond in front. Separate shower house with toilet. Private setting on 5.4 acres at the foot of Mt Chase just off **Mountain Rd.** great ATV & snowmobile area. \$149,000



Carroll PLT- This lot was recently selectively harvested. Driveway in place, a year round road, electric available & a small **Tolman Brook** at one edge- its too good to pass by. POSSIBLE OWNER FINANCING!! Come look today. \$39,000



Burlington- A nice, seasoned driveway and a 16'x24' concrete pad. **Madagascal Pond** is a good warm water fishery and excellent direct access to ATV and snowmobile trails. \$79,000



Lincoln- 1.56+/- acres, field, electricity available, 4 lakes in 1 direction, all of Cold Stream Ponds in another, corner frontage on **Transalpine Rd. & Folsom Pond Rd.** \$19,900



Lincoln- Grab this lot now if you want to own one of the few locations left on **Transalpine Rd.** This large lot feels out in the woods but is only 1.1 miles from the hospital & one more to downtown. Come look today!! \$18,900

Lee- Looking for some privacy but still need year round access and electricity? This lot is well wooded, fairly level and ready for you to take a peek at on **Old Steamboat Road.** It could be the property you have been looking for. \$37,500

Lincoln- A nice lot on the high side of **Route 6.** Surveyed with driveway already in place & electricity available. Plenty of room for a small home or mobile home on the currently cleared driveway. Priced right & ready for you. \$17,500

Carroll PLT- Large acreage. Year round road, **North Rd.** Power readily available. Nice driveway and a rural location. This sounds like a wonderful pot to build your home or cabin. Come look. \$39,000

Lee- 4.3 acres lot on hardwood ridge, nice views, snowmobile & ATV trails, fishing & skiing nearby, electricity available, owner financing, sited on **Skunk Hill Rd.** \$18,900

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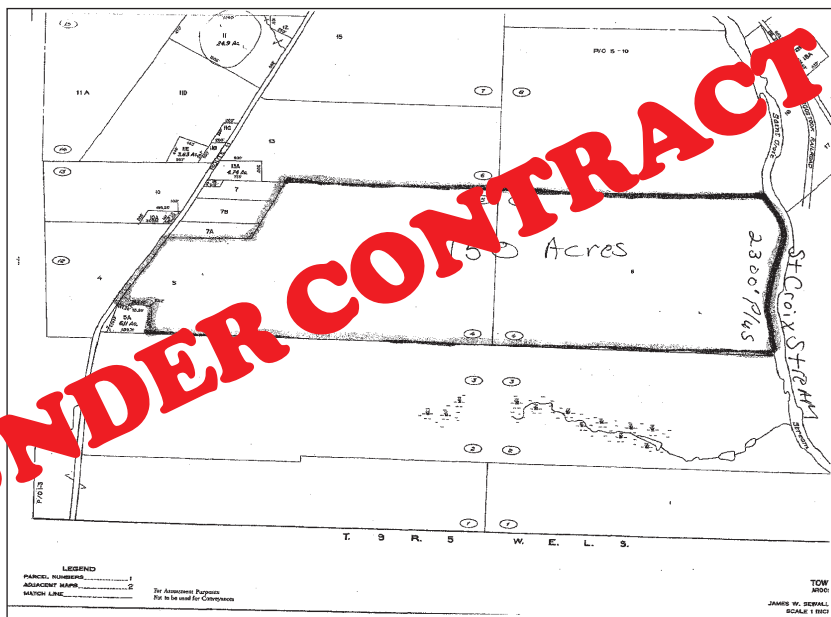
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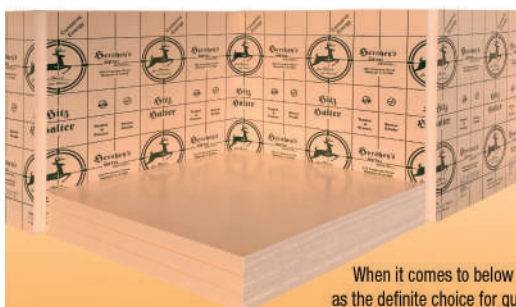
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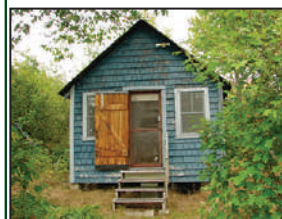
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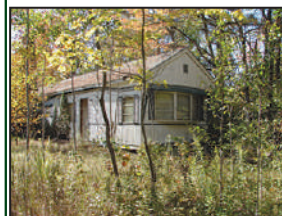
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