

Outdoor Briefs: So. Campsite At Springfield Rec Area Open

SPRINGFIELD — With lower water levels on the Missouri River, the Department of Game, Fish and Parks announced Thursday that the south campground at the Springfield Recreation Area is now available for reservations.

"We were able to open 10 more campsites to the public," said Shane Bertsch, District Park supervisor.

The boat ramp in the bay can be used to access the river, but boaters are urged to use caution because submerged debris can be hazardous.

Park users should avoid swimming in the area due to high water and swift currents.

To make camping reservations, call 1-800-710-2267 or visit www.campsd.com. For more information about Springfield Recreation Area call 605-668-2985.

Men Fined In Fed Court For Illegal SD Lion Kill

RAPID CITY (AP) — Two South Dakota men who were fined in state court and lost their hunting privileges for a year for illegally shooting a mountain lion near Mount Rushmore National Memorial have now also been fined in federal court.

Court documents show that 22-year-old Tyler Krebs of Rapid City and 40-year-old Shannon Homan of Box Elder each were fined \$250. They pleaded guilty to a federal Lacey Act violation for unlawfully taking wildlife in January 2010.

Bighead Carp Found In East Okoboji Lake

SPRIT LAKE, Iowa (AP) — State environmental officials say bighead carp have been found in East Okoboji Lake in northern Iowa and they believe flooding on the Missouri and Little Sioux rivers may have allowed the fish to pass over area dams and eventually into the lake.

The Iowa DNR says the fish were caught Tuesday. They are part of a group of fish known as Asian carp, which includes silver carp, grass carp and black carp. Officials say in a news release issued Wednesday that bighead carp feed on plankton and may compete with native fish for food.

Bighead carp were found in the Little Sioux River below the Linn Grove Dam in 1996 and officials say the fish caught this week were the first bighead carp found above the dam.

OF THE OUTDOORS | GARY HOWEY

Early Game Bird Season Coming Up

BY GARY HOWEY
Hartington, Neb.

It must be that time of the year, as Mo Jo, my black lab indicated that he thought that the hunting season was just around the corner.

Maybe it's the cooler temperatures this morning or the sun not coming up as early, but something has let him know that it's time to get ready for the hunting season.

It happened this morning as I walked out of the house; it was pretty dark, dark enough so that I had to look closely to pick out the silhouette of my black dog as he sat next to the gate of the kennel.

Making my way to my vehicle, I heard a slight whimper and glanced in the direction of the sound as I did, Mo started into his gymnastic routine where from a sitting position he leaps up two and a half feet into the air. When he hits the ground he'll cock his head and rolls his head from side to side trying to figure out if I saw him or not. If he's not acknowledged he'll continue doing it until I drive off.

He doesn't do this any other time of the year, it only happens just prior to the opening of the game bird hunting season.

I've tried to exercise him a little during the hot summer, Mo and I will need to get out and do some exercising. I'll need to increase the amount of time we spend working with his retrieving dummy so he knows I realize that it's getting close to hunting season.

Hunters know that getting their dog and themselves in shape should be their main priorities as summer makes the turn to fall. Early hunting season can be hard on the hunter and man's best friend; especially if he's not in good shape since hunting dogs will run until they drop.

The weather this time of the year varies from cool to darn right hot, so you want to take along plenty of water for your dog, allowing him to drink often. I carry a squirt bottle in my vest and give him a shot of water along the way and when we take a break, I have a collapsible water dish that I water him out of.

Since early season can be so hot it can take a lot out of my dog. I also bring along a packet of Country Vet Dog Fuel High Octane, a powder mixture that I mix with his water or



PHOTO: CASEY CHRISTENSEN
Calvin (left) and James Christensen, of Hartington, Neb., are pictured with the Canada geese they helped their father Casey bag during the early South Dakota Goose Season.

sprinkle it over the top of his food. It's like a Gator Aide for dogs as it contains protein, carbs and electrolytes, giving a Mo Jo that extra boost needed when he's working hard.

Below is information on several of South Dakota and Nebraska's early hunting seasons that will open soon.

S.D., Neb. Dove Season

The earliest of all game bird seasons is the Dove season with the South Dakota season running from Sept. Nov. 9 with a daily bag limit of 8 birds and no possession limit.

Nebraska's Dove season runs from Sept. 1st-Oct. 30th, with hunters allowed 15 birds a day and a possession limit of 30. Hunters in Nebraska will have to have their HIP number in order to hunt Migratory birds. HIP number can be obtained on-line at www.nehip.com

Doves are a migratory bird, so it doesn't take much of a weather change to get them to bunch up and head south. A week of moist damp weather will generally push many of them out of the area. Thankfully, it doesn't happen all at once and once they start to move we'll have some birds coming through from the north.

S.D. Early Goose Season

Because of the huge population of Canada geese in South Dakota, several special falls seasons have been established.

The South Dakota Resident Management Take Early Canada Goose season opens Aug. 13-28 with a daily limit of 8 birds and no possession limit.

Their Nonresident September Canada Goose season is open September 3 - 30th, further information is available on the Game & Parks web site <http://www.gfp.sd.gov>

Waterfowl hunters in South Dakota are required to have the Migratory Bird Certification, which is sold as part of the regular license purchase process by GFP. It may be purchased from storefront license agents across the state or online from the GFP web-site at www.gfp.sd.gov.

Neb. Early Waterfowl Season

As of this writing, information on the Nebraska Seasons hasn't been published. Information on the early goose season will soon be available at www.outdoornebraska.gov

braska.ne.gov/hunting/guides/waterfowl/WFearlydarkgoose.asp

Early Teal Season information will soon be available at www.outdoornebraska.gov/hunting/guides/waterfowl/WFearlyteal.asp

S.D. Grouse

South Dakota's Sharp-tail and Prairie Chicken seasons opens on Sept. 17th, 2011 - Jan. 1, 2012. The daily limit is 3 birds per day with 15 in possession.

Sharp-tailed grouse (Sharptails) and prairie chicken are closely related native birds, and can be found throughout the short grass prairie of central and western South Dakota. Sharptails have a relatively short tail with two central feathers somewhat longer and darker than the outer tail feathers. Their feathers are mottled dark and light browns against a light background. Their cousin, the prairie chickens have a short tail that's dark, and rounded.

Neb. Grouse

In Nebraska the Grouse season will open September 1st, with a special permit required to hunt east of Hwy. 81. As of this writing, the daily limit is 3 and a possession bag limit of 3. Other information on the Nebraska Grouse season can be obtained on-line at www.outdoornebraska.gov/hunting/guides/upland_game/grouse.asp

If you're planning on hunting grouse, be ready to walk as the terrain these birds live in can be hilly and in large tracts.

Look for grouse around stock dams and water tank as well as in shelterbelts during the heat of the day where they'll be hunkered down in the shade.

Another area grouse can be found in the corners of irrigated crop ground which offers them cover as well as easy access to water.

If you are a hunter like me and have permits for most of these seasons, we're going to be busy! But busy is a good thing when it comes to enjoying the outdoors and the early hunting season.

Have a successful and safe early hunting season!

Gary Howey, Hartington, Neb., is the president of *Outdoorsmen Productions LLC* and the producer/host of the *Outdoorsmen Adventures television series* and *Outdoor Adventures Radio*. For more information on the outdoors go to www.outdoorsmenadventures.com.

Proposed Mountain Lion Season In SD Creates Disagreement

PIERRE (AP) — State biologists want to let hunters shoot more mountain lions next year to help increase the Black Hills populations of elk and deer that serve as the lion's prey, a South Dakota wildlife official said Tuesday.

State Wildlife Director Tony Leif said evidence indicates that mountain lions have played a role in recent declines in deer and elk numbers.

"We're looking to find a better balance between the population of mountain lions in the Black Hills and the population of deer and elk that serve as the primary prey base for those lions," Leif said.

Custer veterinarian Sharon Seneczko, president of the Black Hills Mountain Lion Foundation, said she does not oppose holding a hunting season for mountain lions and agrees with a part of the proposal that would let more hunters into Custer State Park. But she said the overall limit should be held at this year's level to get a better idea of what effect increased limits from prior years have had.

"They have continually, year after year, increased the quota. We already have evidence even last year that the mountain lion population is on the decline," said

Seneczko, whose foundation seeks to preserve a healthy mountain lion population.

"Now, Oh my gosh! We don't have enough elk and the lions take the fall again," Seneczko said.

The season proposed by the Wildlife Division's staff would have a maximum lion kill of 60 cats. The season would run Jan. 1-March 31, but would close earlier if hunters kill 60 mountain lions overall or 40 female lions.

This year's season had a quota of 45 lions, with no more than 30 females to be shot. A limited season in Custer State Park allowed up to five lions to be killed, giving an overall limit of 50 lions. The season covers the entire state, but nearly all hunting is done in the Black Hills area.

The proposal for next winter would eliminate the separate quota for Custer State Park and add lions shot there to the overall total. It also would allow more hunters into the park, up to 15 at a time.

The Game, Fish and Parks Commission will make a final decision on the mountain lion season after holding a public hearing Oct. 6 in Rapid City.

Some hunters have sought to have more mountain lions killed

because they believe the cougars are killing too many deer and elk, popular targets for hunters.

Leif said the Game, Fish and Parks Department has set a target of 150 to 200 mountain lions in the Black Hills. The proposed season would likely reduce lion numbers to the lower end of that target range, he said.

The department sought to reduce the numbers of elk and deer in the Black Hills a few years ago when a surplus caused problems for landowners. A combination of hunting, weather and mountain lions has caused the elk and deer population to drop below desired

levels, Leif said.

A study of 30 elk calves fitted with radio tracking collars in the southern Black Hills has already found that 14 have been killed by predators, 13 of them were confirmed kills by lions, Leif said.

"That is a source of mortality for all those elk calves we didn't have a few years back," Leif said.

Seneczko said the proposed

boost in the mountain lion limit would likely mean more females are killed, which in turn means more young lions would be orphaned at the age of 6 months or so. Those young lions are not taught how to catch their normal prey, so they wind up attacking people's pets or having other conflicts with humans, she said.

The entire ecosystem could be

harmful if the lion population drops too much, Seneczko said. For example, mountain lions and other predators keep elk and deer moving naturally, rather than staying in one place and damaging the vegetation, she said.

Unfortunately, some people want predators removed from the Black Hills so there's no risk to being outdoors, Seneczko said.

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Session 1: Yankton
8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
Thursday, August 25
Yankton Area Senior Center
900 Whiting Drive

Session 2: Yankton
5:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Thursday, August 25
Elks Lodge #994
504 W. 27th Street

This training is supported by Grant #R18TP00320 entitled, "A Health Security Card for Disasters and Public Health Emergencies" from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Office of Public Health Preparedness & Response. Contents of this flyer are solely the responsibility of the project team and do not represent the official views of the AMA or the CDC.