

Of The Outdoors | Gary Howey

Prowling For Cats On The 'Jim'

BY GARY HOWEY
Hartington, Neb.

During the late summer, the James River may not look like much and if you didn't know the river, you'd think of it as a small unproductive slow moving river, but come spring it can spread out, expanding, flooding hundreds of acres in the low-lying fields adjacent to it.

The river meanders 710 miles out of north-central North Dakota working its way southward through South Dakota until it eventually drains into the Missouri River just east of Yankton.

To some, the Jim River is just a river flooding their field in the spring, while others, anglers in particular, know the river holds excellent populations of catfish as well as walleye and northern pike.

Even though it may not look like a productive body of water, if you were to look at the state records, you'd find that both the state record channel and flathead catfish were taken, you will find that both came from the muddy waters of the James River.

Roy Groves holds the South Dakota state record for channel cat; he pulled a fifty-five pounder from the river in 1949; while Davin Holland, caught his state record flathead or yellow cat, a sixtythree pound eight-ounce lunger from these waters in 2006.

These muddy waters of the Jim would be our destination on this trip as Team Outdoorsmen Adventures member Doug Haas Mitchell) and I would launch his flat bottom boat from the park on the east side of Olivet, where we'd be filming and fishing, going after catfish.

Doug, a manger at the Mitchell Cabela's is an avid angler; going after all species of fish, with many, a day spent on the James in pursuit of catfish.

The structure on the James would be the snags that high water had



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Team Outdoorsmen Adventures member Doug Haas of Mitchell with one of the many channel cats taken on a recent trip near Olivet.

piled up along the shoreline. Catfish are notorius for taking up residence in some of the nastiest snags. Because of this, when fishing the James, it is a good idea to use heavier equipment, longer heavier rod, large capacity reel and heavier line than you'd normally use when fishing for other species.

Motoring up to our first snag, we tied off on the downstream side, baited up two rods with cutbait, skipjack and creek chubs, another with crawdads and the last with Sonny's Extra Sticky Channel Catfish dip bait.

Placing our long rods into rod holders, we sat back to wait for our first bite, which didn't take long as suddenly, Doug's crawdad baited rod started to bounce indicating a bite. He set the hook, hard, horsing the fish away from the snag, bringing it back towards the boat where I netted our first fish, a chunky three pounder, the first first of many to go into the livewell.

Early in the day, the crawdads out

fishing all other baits, but as the day went on, our stinkbait baits started to shine, accounting for the majority of our catch.

For those of you who haven't had the pleasure of using sticky stinkbait for catfish, I'll explain how it's used.

First, as its name implies, it stinks and will clear your sinuses in a heartbeat, which makes it great bait for a catfish as its eye sight is poor, but its sense of smell is excellent. Besides being smonic, it's sticky, especially when used during the warmer temperatures.

You'll need some type of a stick to pack it in and around your ribbed plastic dip worm as you really don't want to get it on you or anything else you might have to rub against or touch. Once you have it packed full of bait, then the fun begins as you have to cast it out without throwing all of the bait off the worm.

Being the experienced anglers we were, we reared back, taking aim

at our targeted area, hoping once our bait and the two-ounce weight arrived at its destination, that there would be enough bait on the worm to attract the fish.

No matter how careful you are some, maybe quite a bit of your bait would and could end up on the boat, your clothing and your tackle as our camera operator Kella found out when several gobs landed on the bill of her pink cap.

It can be a hassle, but in the end, it is worth it, as stinkbait draws channel catfish to your baited hook like no other bait can, giving off a scent trail guiding the fish right to the area you're fishing.

Other species of catfish, especially the flatheads prefer livebait or cutbait with baits such as cut up skipjack or creek chubs being some of the best bait for them.

Cutbait can be any number of things including creek chubs, goldeye or mooneye (skipjack). In some

states, rough fish such as silver (flying) carp can be used for cutbait, but not in South Dakota; anglers aren't allowed to use any species of carp or gamefish for bait.

On each snag in the James, we took several channel catfish and on one snag, our cutbait hooked a small flathead cat.

The high water flooding last year had changed the face of the James, which didn't seem to deter the fish from biting. There did seem to be less snags that we'd fished in years past and deeper water in several of the areas.

Even though the looks of the river had changed, there were still plenty of down timber running out into the water forming snags along the bank, creating excellent habitat for the catfish. On every snag we set up on, we caught a good number of catfish, with the largest in the five-pound class.

If you love catfishing, South Dakota is the place to be as on the James River and the majority of the rest of the states waters, the catfish limit is ten daily and twenty in possession while on the Missouri River (Lake Oahe, Lake Sharpe and Lake Francis Case) you'll find there's no limit on channel catfish.

The James River may not seem like much, but if you are looking or some excellent catfish, you may want to grab your rod a bottle of stinkbait, minnows, nightcrawlers or crawdads and try it, as channel catfish just aren't too particular as to what they eat and when fried up make for some fine eating.

Gary Howey, Hartington, Neb., is a former tournament angler, fishing and hunting guide. Howey is the Producer/Host of the award winning Outdoorsmen Adventures television series which can be seen during the third quarter at 6:30 am Saturday on KTTM/KTTW-TV Fox, Sioux Falls/Huron, S.D. In the Yankton area, it can also be seen on local channels 2 & 98 at 6:30 pm Saturday and 7:00 am Sunday. He and Simon Fuller are the hosts of the Outdoor Adventures radio program Monday-Saturday at 6:45 am on Classic Hits 106.3 and ESPN Sports Radio 1570. If you're looking for more outdoor information, check out www.outdoorsmenadventures.com and like Outdoorsmen Adventures on Facebook.



PHOTO: SDSU COLLEGE OF AG BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES

A foliar spray has been developed to deter Canada geese from damaging soybean fields. Led by SDSU wildlife science professor Chuck Dieter, the research will continue to determine the most effective field application practices to reduce crop damage by geese.

SDSU Helping To Develop New Goose Repellent For Soybeans

BY KINDRA GORDON

SDSU College of Ag Bio. Science

Sometimes South Dakota's wild animals have challenges co-existing with farmers and ranchers. With wetlands adjacent to cropland in eastern South Dakota, farmers know that some damage to their crop from waterfowl and wildlife is likely.

But in recent years the Giant Canada Geese in the region have been especially detrimental to soybeans. To help find a solution, the South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks (GF&P) personnel have been assisting farmers by putting in electric fence to keep the geese off of their fields. The fencing has worked, but is labor intensive and expensive.

So, South Dakota State University researchers were tasked with developing an alternative solution.

Led by Chuck Dieter, a professor of wildlife science in the Natural Resource Management Department at SDSU, a spray repellent to keep geese out of the fields is being tested and

showing signs of success.

Dieter explains that a foliar spray is applied to the leaves of the plant and works as a secondary deterrent. This means a goose will still eat some of the plant, but leaves sprayed with the repellent will make the goose sick, creating an aversion so they won't eat the plant again.

Dieter says, until the aversion occurs there is still some initial damage to the crop, but in preliminary trials the geese tend to stay away from the crop after they've had their first taste of the repellent.

Dieter notes that the active ingredient being used in the repellent SDSU is developing is harmless and is approved as a seed treatment on many crops.

However, this is the first foliar product being developed with the ingredient.

Currently, Dieter and his colleagues are initiating a two-year study to fine tune the repellent. They are examining what concentration is most effective; how often the repellent should be applied to plants; and how deep the repellent should be applied into the field to deter the geese.



New Student Registration & Orientation
Monday, August 19

6:00 - 6:30pm - 3 year olds
6:45 - 7:15pm - 4 year olds
7:30 - 8:00pm - Jr. Kindergarten

Preschool classes offered:

3 year old Class....Tuesday/Thursday, 8:45-11:30 AM
4 year old Class....Monday/Wednesday/Friday, 8:45-11:30 AM
Jr. Kindergarten....Monday-Friday, 12:30-3:00 PM

Registrations still being accepted
For more information, call 665-5594
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for enrollment
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OUTDOORS DIGEST

SD Completes First America's Great Outdoors Project In Region
SIOUX FALLS — In addition to being South Dakota's newest state park, Good Earth State Park at Blood Run was recently recognized as the first America's Great Outdoors (AGO) project to be completed in the Midwest region.
Michael Reynolds, Midwest regional director, National Park Service, made the official presentation earlier this month to state park staff.
President Obama launched the America's Great Outdoors Initiative in 2010 to develop a 21st century conservation and recreation agenda. The initiative encourages conservation solutions from the American people to protect their natural heritage and to strengthen the ties between both youth and families to nature and outdoor recreation.
S.D. Governor Dennis Daugaard selected the Blood Run National Historic Landmark project as one of South Dakota's two projects for the initiative. The project was selected for its cultural significance and an increased threat by population expansion and development.

L&C Heritage Day Aug. 24 At Ponca State Park
LINCOLN, Neb. — Explore the journey of the Corps of Discovery during Lewis and Clark Heritage Day on Aug. 24 at Ponca State Park. The expedition passed through the Ponca area in late August more than 200 years ago.
Activities include canoeing the Missouri National Recreational River with the National Park Service, educational programs presented by park staff, period games and crafts.
Historical performer Darrel Draper will present a program at the park's West Shelter at 1 and 4 p.m.
Contact the park at 402-755-2284 for more information or visit the park's Facebook page.

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