

OF THE OUTDOORS | GARY HOWEY

# Gearing Up For Spring Turkey

BY GARY HOWEY  
Hartington, Neb.

For those of us, like me who live for spring turkey hunting, our wait is almost over as it won't be long before we'll be in the field.

With the increase in turkey numbers throughout the upper Midwest, we hunters have the opportunity to obtain multiple permits.

This year, I and my hunting partner will have permits in three states, Iowa, Nebraska and South Dakota, with Nebraska allowing us to harvest three birds.

The first thing I do once I know I'll have my permit, is to get out and check with the farmers and ranchers where I've hunted in the past, obtaining permission, as things might have changed since the last time I hunted. In some cases part of or all of the land may have been sold to another or woodlands converted to crop ground, which may change my whole game plan.



Gary  
**HOWEY**

After getting permission, I'll do a drive by, looking the area over for any changes that might have occurred since I was there last and armed with this information will locate a map of the area so I know exactly how the land lays and where the property lines are. It's not a bad idea to contact adjoining landowners to inform them you'll be hunting the area so there won't be any surprises when they see your vehicle or you parked or near their land.

I don't know how many times I've stopped by an adjoining land owner to let them know I'd be hunting near by when they thanked me or even gave me permission to hunt on their land if I needed to.

After getting my permission and everything I could find on the land I'll be hunting, I'll spend some spend time in the field, scouting, with my first scouting opportunity while I'm out hunting deer sheds as this gives me an early opportunity to check things out.

During this time of the year, there's generally snow on the ground, with the birds still in their large winter flocks, which makes locating them, an easy task.

With snow on the ground, figuring out where the birds are congregating, feeding and roosting isn't to tough. Turkeys are scratchers, so look for areas where the leaves or snow has been pulled back. leaving open areas, as this is where the



Team Outdoorsmen Adventures member Tom Mitchell of KELO-Radio in Sioux Falls is pictured with a Tom turkey taken during an South Dakota morning snow storm in April.

turkeys have scratched down through the ground debris and snow to find food..

Roost trees are also easier to locate as there will be a lot of tracks in the snow around the roost and since turkeys have a tendency to roost in the same area day in and day, year in and year out unless spooked out of the area, there will be a large accumulations of droppings under their favorite roost tree.

While hunting sheds is the only time I really spend a whole lot of time in the area as I don't want to alarm the birds. To avoid spooking the birds, I like to return to the area from time to time and do the rest of my scouting from the road and trails using my binoculars, glassing the area thoroughly from different vantage points.

One thing I won't due when I'm out doing some early scouting is to use my turkey call as the only things using a call when you aren't hunting will do is to educate and spook the birds.

One call I will us, is a shock call, a call that may shock the Toms into gobbling, calls such as predator or owl call work well, with the owl call working real well

when the birds are in the roost, just before dark and at sunrise.

As the season draws closer, I'll continue to go through the area more often, setting up on high vantage points and glass from my vehicle, giving me an idea as to where the birds are once they've spit up into their harems.

Each year prior to the opener, I like to pattern my shotgun at different distances with any new loads that came out since last season using Shoot N See turkey targets. This gives me an idea as to which shells and chokes give me the best pattern.

This is also a good time to check over your calls as calls like all of our equipment take a beating when we're out hunting. I especially need to try out my diaphragm calls as the latex in these can break down over the winter.

I'll go through all my calls, roughing up and testing my slate and glass calls, chalking up and testing my box calls, just to make sure they'll be ready when I locate that love struck Tom looking for a good time.

Since you never know what type of

hunting conditions you'll face during spring turkey season, which could be snow, rain or ankle deep mud, it's best to be prepared and have all types of camo and rain gear ready to go. I've hunted turkeys in downpours, eight inches of snow and in extremely high temperatures all of which may change from one day to the next, so it's best to be prepared for almost anything when it comes to a spring hunt.

Because I won't know what conditions I'll be hunting in, from the swamps of Mississippi to the Black Hills of South Dakota, I have both leather and camo rubber clad neoprene boots.

Different hunting conditions you may face during the spring, there's no important gear that needs to be checked than your boots. If you're like me, you may have put a lot of miles on your boots during the spring hunt and then put them away until next season. This is the reason I check them over, clean then up and give my leather boots a good coat of water proofing.

The week or two prior to the season, just before it gets dark, I'll head out and use my locator calls to try and locate the exact area the birds are roosting in and once I have that figured out, I'll use my maps to figure out where they'll head once they leave the roost, which generally is towards their food source.

With this information, if I'm bow hunting and using a ground blind, I'll head out to set it up quickly and quietly in an area where they'll move through on their way to feed.

If I'm not going to use a ground blind and instead will run and gun, I'll leave the area alone, returning the two nights prior to opener to use my locator-shock calls to verify the trees the birds are roosting in.

Once the preseason scouting and planning is done, when opening day arrives, I'll be in the woods with a plan that will help assure this will be another great spring turkey hunt and not on where I'm not out wondering aimlessly un the woods.

Good luck this spring and on all your hunts.

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 on Fox affiliates throughout the upper Midwest. He and Simon Fuller are the hosts of the Outdoor Adventures radio program on Classic Hits 106.3 and ESPN Sports Radio 1570. If you're looking for more outdoor information, it can be found at [www.outdoorsmenadventures.com](http://www.outdoorsmenadventures.com).

## OUTDOORS DIGEST

### State Park Camping Reservation System New In 2013

PIERRE — Visitors planning camping trips to South Dakota state parks and recreation areas will notice changes when reserving campsites this year.

The Department of Game, Fish and Parks has implemented a new reservation system, and state park officials are asking campers to be patient while the final touches are put on the reservation website.

"The new website is still a work in progress, and we will have all of the features that campers are used to, up and running soon," said state Parks and Recreation Director Doug Hofer.

In the meantime, campers wishing to book more than one campsite at a time are asked to reserve them through the call center at 1-800-710-2267.

The website will also be adding a campsite availability calendar and customer logins.

Reservations for camping in most state parks can be made within 90 days of arrival dates. The first day to make reservations for the annual Open House Weekend is Feb. 16 for a May 17 arrival. During Open House Weekend, no park entrance fees are charged, but camping fees still apply.

Reservations for Memorial Day weekend can be made beginning Feb. 23 for a May 24 arrival. Reservations can be made one year in advance for campsites at Custer State Park and for lodges in all state parks and recreation areas.

Reservations can be made 24 hours a day both online at [www.campsd.com](http://www.campsd.com) or by calling 1-800-710-2267. Campsites become available at 7 a.m. on the first day of the 90-day window. There is a \$7.70 per site non-refundable reservation fee, which does not apply to South Dakota residents.

The full 90-day window calendar can be found online at [www.gfp.sd.gov](http://www.gfp.sd.gov).

### Officials Urge Caution After ATVs Break Through Ice

LINCOLN, Neb. — Nebraska Game and Parks Commission officials are urging anglers to take caution after two all-terrain vehicles broke through the ice and became submerged at Cottonwood-Steverson Lake on Feb. 4.

Conservation officer Heath Packett of Gordon said two ATVs carrying three riders broke through the ice on the northeast corner of Cottonwood Lake in Cherry County. He said each of the riders safely escaped from the frigid water, which is about 8 feet deep at the location of the accident.

The accident has prompted officials to prohibit the use of ATVs on Cottonwood-Steverson, a 680-acre body of water 30 miles north of Hyannis in the Sandhills. The use of ATVs on nearby Home Valley Lake also has been prohibited.

"With this week's warm temperatures, the ice conditions are deteriorating and they're not likely to get better before spring," Packett said. "Ice anglers and others should be especially cautious."

### Visit Ponca State Park for Marsh Madness

LINCOLN, Neb. — March visitors at Ponca State Park can experience spectacular bird-viewing opportunities and related activities during the spring migratory celebration of Marsh Madness.

The public is invited to witness the migration during guided tours with members of the Loess Hills Audubon Society on March 2-3, 9-10 and 16-17. Visitors will view the brilliant spring plumage and courtship displays of geese, ducks, bald eagles and other raptors following the northern migration. A variety of resident wintering nuthatches, woodpeckers, cardinals, finches and sparrow also can be seen at the park's bird feeders.

The park comprises 2,400 acres and sits astride the Missouri National Recreational River (MNRR), a significant flyway that serves as the feeding, breeding and staging grounds for migratory birds. The park is listed by the National Audubon Society as an Important Bird Area, with nearly 300 bird species having been reported. More than 70 of those species breed in the area.

Special educational bird programs will be offered each Saturday at the park's Resource and Education Center. Field guides and binoculars will be available. Park staff will provide regular updates on the status of bird migrations in the park at [twitter.com/PoncaStatePark](http://twitter.com/PoncaStatePark) and [facebook.com/PoncaSP](http://facebook.com/PoncaSP).

Bird feeders also are located at each mini-lodge, which are available at a 30-percent discount. A park entry permit is required. For more information, visit [OutdoorNebraska.gov](http://OutdoorNebraska.gov) or call 402-755-2284.

### Neb. Sets Firearms Education Instructor Training

ELBA, Neb. (AP) — The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission has scheduled training for apprentice firearm hunter education instructors.

The session is scheduled to run from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. Monday at the Elba Community Center in the central Nebraska community of Elba.

People should register by Friday by contacting Mike Streeter at 402-471-6134 or [mike.streeter@tnbraska.gov](mailto:mike.streeter@tnbraska.gov) or visit [huntsafenebraska.org](http://huntsafenebraska.org).

## Bucks

From Page 8

scored seven points while freshman Reid Sawatzke ended up with six points.

Yankton shot 47 percent from the field in the first half but managed to go just 6-of-21 (28 percent) in the second.

For Huron (12-5), 6-6 center Justin Decker finished with 16 points and six rebounds.

The Bucks host Brandon Valley on Thursday in what could be

a preview of District 2AA postseason action.

In sub-varsity action, the Yankton JV squad defeated Huron 71-48. Lake Sawatzke and Chipper Granfilan scored 12 points apiece while Tanner Termansen and Reid Sawatzke each added 11 points in the rout.

The sophomore Bucks won by a final of 59-53 after outscoring Huron 18-10 in the fourth quarter. Austin Johnson led the way with 16 points while Paul Fanta added 10.

Brady Sorenson's double-double (26 points, 11 rebounds) led the freshman team to a 63-27 win over Huron. Blake Savey added nine points.

You can follow Chris Riley on Twitter at [twitter.com/ChrisCRiley](http://twitter.com/ChrisCRiley)

HURON (12-5, 7-4 ESD)	
J.P. Noonan 1-4 1-2 4, Will Carr 1-4 5-6 8, Lucas Morrison 4-7 2-2 12, Adam Zwanizgar 2-3 0-0 4, Justin Decker 6-12 4-5 16, Houston Heinz 0-1 0-0 0, Alex Kopfmann 1-1 0-0 3, James White 0-1 0-0 0, Caleb Carr 2-5 0-0 4, Hayden Busch 1-2 0-0 2, Totals 18-40 12-15 53.	
YANKTON (4-11, 2-9 ESD)	
Michael Rucker 6-10 0-0 16, Andrew Hummel 1-3 0-0 2, J.J. Hejna 1-4 5-5 7, Brady Hale 2-8 1-2 5, Kellen Soulek 3-6 1-3 7, Ryan Olson 0-0 0-0 0, Landon Breen 0-2 0-0 0, Reid Sawatzke 1-5 4-6, Totals 14-38 11-14 43.	
HURON	9 26 37 53
YANKTON	13 21 35 43
Three-Point Field Goals — H 5-10 (Morrison 2-2, Noonan 1-3, Carr 1-2, Kopfmann 1-1, Heinz 0-1, Busch 0-1, Y 4-11 (Rucker 4-7, Sawatzke 0-3, Hummel 0-1). Rebounds — H 26 (Decker 6), Y 23 (Soulek 10). Personal Foul — Y 19, H 11. Assists — Y 9 (Soulek 3), H 8 (Zwanizgar 5). Turnovers — Y 17, H 16. Blocks — Y 3 (Hale 1), H 1 (Decker). Steals — Y 6 (Hejna 3), H 4 (Carr 2). Fouled Out — None.	

## Wolters

From Page 8

he look to score in bunches.

"In the second half, it was obvious, Nate would have to do it."

Not only did Wolters send the Jacks to their eighth straight win since that loss in Vermillion, he bettered the 47 points by Oakland's Travis Bader two weeks — the previous Division I high this season.

The two will face off tonight in a highly-anticipated offensive showdown.

For what it's worth, the Jacks have never won at Oakland, and the Golden Grizzlies will likely try to force SDSU role players beat them, Merriam said.

"It's not going to come down to Bader against Wolters, it'll come to, can (Jordan) Dykstra have a double-double or does

(Corey) Petros get a double-double for Oakland," he said. "Both kids will end up with their numbers."

"It'll be a dog fight."

More notable stats from Wolters' record-setting night Thursday:

- Scored 38 of his team's 51 points after halftime. Wolters' career high before Thursday night? 36 points
- His 53 points were the most in Division I action in regulation since 2009 (Kentucky's Jodie Meeks scored 54 that year)
- Wolters' 53 ranks third all-time in Summit League history. North Dakota State's Ben Woodside scored 60 points against Stephen F. Austin in 2008 and Kansas City's Michael Watson dropped 54 against Oral Roberts in 2003. Both of those, however, came in overtime games

You can follow Jeremy Hoeck on Twitter at [twitter.com/jhoeck](http://twitter.com/jhoeck)

## Gazelles

From Page 8

should be proud of yourselves," Pesicka said. "It was certainly nice to pick up a win."

Also for the Lynx (4-13), Carley Kueter finished with seven points, and the trio of Brynne Rist, Kara Schroeder and Jordyn Griffith had four points apiece.

The win was also crucial for

Yankton in upcoming District 2AA pairings. Yankton and Brandon Valley both have four wins, with the fourth-place team in the district getting a first-round matchup with Sioux Falls Washington.

"It's been a tough couple of days, but we built some nice confidence tonight," said Pesicka, whose team hosts Brookings on Tuesday.

Brandon Valley won the junior varsity game 53-24. Becky Frick scored 12 points for Yankton, while Brianna Benjamin had eight points.

The Lynx won the sophomore

game 39-38 in overtime. Madison Dangler scored 14 points for Yankton.

In the lone freshman game, Brandon Valley won 40-38 in double overtime. Kate Weinandt led the Gazelles with 16 points, while Julie Soto added six points.

YANKTON (4-11)

Brianna Newman 3, Andi Sprakel 2; Whittee Larson 1; Jessica Wirth 3, Mikala Hora 20; Becky Frick 2; Kelsey Fitzgerald 7; Morgan Tessier 4; Kelsey Butler 6

BRANDON VALLEY (4-13)

Brynne Rist 4; Allie Koehn 16; Taylor Thorson 2; Brooke Merry 2; Kara Schroeder 4; Carley Kueter 7; Jordyn Griffith 4

YANKTON

9 24 35 46

BRANDON VALLEY

4 19 27 37

Free Throws: Brandon Valley 16-23, Yankton 11-14. Rebounds: Yankton 28, Brandon Valley 17. Turnovers: Yankton 26, Brandon Valley 16.

## From Title to Closing, We Do It Right.



You're entitled to great service. At Meridian Title of Clay County and Yankton County, we pride ourselves on providing our clients with accurate research and seamless real estate transactions backed by the experienced staff, cutting-edge industry technology and resources of The Title Resource Network. We are the clear choice for realtors, bankers, buyers and sellers.

### OUR SERVICES:

- Title insurance for residential and commercial property
- Closing services
- Escrow services
- Owners and encumbrance reports
- New construction

Contact us today to start the conversation!

Meridian Title of Clay County  
THE TITLE RESOURCE NETWORK

100 East Main | Vermillion, SD 57069  
Phone: 605.624.7244 | Fax: 605.624.1965  
[vermillion@thetitulresource.network](mailto:vermillion@thetitulresource.network)

Meridian Title of Yankton County  
THE TITLE RESOURCE NETWORK

314 Walnut Street | Yankton, SD 57078  
Phone: 605.689.2800 | Fax: 605.689.2802  
[yankton@thetitulresource.network](mailto:yankton@thetitulresource.network)

## OUR ROOTS ARE IN AGRICULTURE AG BANKERS



Amy  
Beran

Justin  
Wagner



First National Bank South Dakota  
WE'RE THE ONE.™

322 Broadway, Yankton SD, 57078 | 1.800.262.9611 | [www.fnbsd.com](http://www.fnbsd.com)