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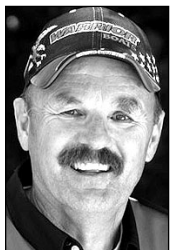
To Catch Fish, Think Like A Fish

BY GARY HOWEY
Hartington, Neb.

When I'm doing in-store promotions and fishing seminars, I get a lot of questions. The one that's asked the most often is, "How can I catch fish?"

It's not really all that complicated; first you have to understand why fish do certain things and when they'll do it.

What you need to do is to think like a fish. In order to understand fish, you first need to understand the senses a fish uses to survive.



Gary Howey

One of the most misunderstood senses of the fish would be its lateral line.

A fish's lateral line is made up of a bundle of nerves whose projecting hairs is enclosed in a gelatinous substance located on either side of the fish.

The lateral line is sensitive to changes in the water pressure and as the pressure changes

either by a change in depth or an approaching fish or creature causes the hairs to vibrate, sending signals to the brain allowing the fish to detect movement that they may not have seen.

The lateral line also helps fish to swim in tight schools without running into each other.

The eyesight of a fish is similar to that of we humans. They're able to detect both brightness and color.

Fish that roam the shallow water, such as bass, have excellent eyesight. In bright light, bass see many of the colors that humans are able to see.

Other species of fish won't have the full line of color perception that humans do.

Since water filters out colors, fish located in deeper water can't detect all the colors that shallow water cousins can.

Walleyes for instance see primarily orange and green, with all other colors appearing as different shades of gray.

Fluorescence hold its color longer in deeper water, what this means is that the fish are more apt to see a fluorescent colored lure better in deeper water.

Fish that feed in deep water aren't able to distinguish the different colors so instead of responding to color, they respond to vibration and the flashes of light coming off predators, prey fish or your lure.

All species of fish have an excellent sense of hearing. Part of the reason that a



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Fish use numerous senses to survive and locate food. Members of the salmon family have the most acute sense of smell, allowing them to return to the stream that they were born in to spawn.

fish hears so well is because water conducts sound better than air.

Fish don't have ears like other animals; they pick up sound through the bones located in their head.

The way one species of fish will relate to sound varies from one species to another. The vibration made by an angler walking along a bank can spook trout, but panfish don't seem to be bothered by noise.

I can attest for this first-hand as a few

years ago when we were SCUBA diving in Lake Francis Case. Most of the fish in the area we were working moved away from the bubbles coming from our gear. The panfish weren't afraid at all and came closer with the more racket we made.

Taste is another sense that fish have. Taste is not one of their primary senses and not many fish rely heavily on just this sense when feeding.

The exception to this rule is the bullhead and catfish family. They have very

poor eyesight and rely heavily on the taste receptors located on the outside of their mouth in their barbells or whiskers to help locate food.

The sense of smell is excellent in most species of fish. As they move through the water, their sense of smell is continually being used, checking out the surrounding body of water.

While swimming through the water, the water passes through the nasal sac located in the snout. The water enters through the front openings, passes over nerve endings or receptors located inside the head and then flows back out the rear openings. The receptors send messages to the fish's brain letting the fish know what's happening in their aquatic environment.

The sense of smell varies from one species of fish to another. Larger fish generally have large openings and more receptors making their sense of smell much better than that of a smaller fish.

The species of fish with the premier sense of smell is the salmon family. When it's spawning time, they use their sense of smell to travel hundreds of miles back to the stream where they were born.

Since fish have five senses that they use to locate food, it makes sense that we as anglers should use bait that arouses as many of those senses as possible.

In dark or stained water, the sense of sight won't be as important as other senses such as their lateral line, smell or hearing will be.

When fishing dirty water, I'll use a noisy, flashing lure with some type of live bait or attractant. The noise or vibration given off by the lure will let the fish zero in on the bait using its lateral line and hearing. The flash will help the fish to pick up any light changes coming off the lure and the live bait will not only add to the vibration but it will also be giving off a scent trail that the fish can follow.

In clearer water conditions, I'll tone down the flash, as a bright flash in clear water is more apt to spook the fish. If I'm using a spinner and crawlers, I'll go with a lure that has smaller blades.

By knowing how the fish is going to hunt for food, you can use bait that will arouse more of the senses and lead the fish to your offering.

Think like a fish and you'll find that your fishing will become more enjoyable as your fish catching increases.

Gary Howey, Hartington, Neb., is the producer/host of the *Outdoorsmen Adventures* television series, which can be seen throughout the upper Midwest on Fox affiliates. For more information on fishing, hunting and the outdoors go to www.outdoorsmenadventures.com.

OUTDOOR REPORT

Neb. Hunters Must Sign Up For Bird Harvest Program

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — The required hunter registration in the state's Harvest Information Program begins Aug. 1.

The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission says program registration is required of Nebraskans 16 and older and all nonresidents who plan to hunt migratory game birds between Aug. 1 and July 31 next year.

The federally mandated program helps officials keep track of how many birds are killed each year by hunters. The data help the setting of limits and seasons.

Hunters may register online at www.nehip.com or by telephone at 877-634-8687. The hunters will be given numbers that they must keep with them while on hunts.

Permits are available at the commission Web site, OutdoorNebraska.org.

Neb. Pressey Rifle Championships Set For Sept. 25

BROKEN BOW, Neb. (AP) — The annual Nebraska High School Small Bore Rifle Silhouette Championships have been scheduled for Sept. 25 at Pressey Wildlife Management Area south of Broken Bow.

Hunter-education graduates who are at least 11 years old and have not graduated high school may compete.

The competition has no entry fee. Entrants must prove they've obtained hunter-education certificates.

Trophies and medals will be awarded to winners in each class, which includes individual and team competition.

More information is available from Matthew Haumont at 308-872-2348.

Youth Waterfowl Camp Planned

PIERRE — The Game, Fish and Parks Department will host a free one-day Youth Waterfowl Camp on Saturday, Aug. 7, at the Blue Dog State Fish Hatchery grounds near Waubay.

Youth aged 10-16 are invited and must be accompanied by a parent or guardian.

Activities include tips and techniques on waterfowl hunting, shooting, decoy set up, waterfowl calling, dog training, proper gun cleaning, waterfowl identification, and waterfowl management information.

The event will be held from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. regardless of the weather. Lunch will be provided.

All participants must pre-register through the GFP office in Webster by calling 605-345-3381. Registration is limited to 60 youth.

Blue Dog Hatchery is located on the northwest corner of Blue Dog Lake.

Firearms Antelope Season Finalized

PIERRE — The South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks Commission has decided to significantly reduce the number of antelope tags available for hunters this fall.

Two difficult winters in the antelope main range have decreased herd numbers.

GFP will cut the number of multiple tag licenses in many of the hunting units. Resident hunters will be offered 1,220 more single-tag licenses, 2,845 fewer two-tag licenses (5,690 tags), and 8,970 fewer three-tag licenses (26,910 tags) than 2009.

Nonresident hunters will be offered 98 more single-tag licenses, 227 fewer two-tag licenses (454 tags), and 717 fewer three-tag licenses (2,151 tags) than 2009.

East River Deer, Refuge Deer Seasons Finalized

PIERRE — East River deer hunters will have the opportunity to apply for double the number of three-tag deer licenses for the upcoming 2010 season in South Dakota.

The South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks Commission has reduced the number of one-tag licenses available by 520, reduced the number of two-tag licenses by 3,875, and increased the number of three-tag licenses by 2,550. Overall, there will be an increase of 280 tags available in 2010 compared to 2009.

Newton Hills Park Hosts 31st Annual Sioux River Folk Music Festival

CANTON — Newton Hills State Park is preparing for three days of music, dancing and family fun during the 31st annual Sioux River Folk Festival, which will be held Aug. 6-8.

The festival kicks off Friday at 7 p.m., with performances by Crabgrass Crew, Art Stevenson & Highwater, Bill Bourne & the Bop Ensemble and Elephant Revival.

The entertainment line-up continues on Saturday, Aug. 7 at 1 p.m., with shows by Public Domain Tune Band, Art Stevenson, Elephant Revival, Bill Bourne & the Bop Ensemble.

During the dinner break at 5 p.m., a folk music campground contest, "Minutes of Folk Fame" will be held welcoming all acoustic vocal and/or instrumental solo, duo, and group acts. The winning act will have 15 minutes to play in front of the Saturday night crowd and open for the big closing set. The winner will also receive \$31.31 and original Headley Eyegore artwork signed by Headley himself.

Music-inspired workshops will also be held on Saturday and Sunday from 10 a.m.-noon. On Sunday, the festival features Art Stevenson and Bill Bourne & the Bop Ensemble in a gospel show starting at noon.

Advance tickets are available through the following outlets: Garden of Eat in Canton and East Dakota Natural Foods Co-op in Sioux Falls. Tickets can also be purchased at the gate or by mail. Additional information is available online at www.ftm.org or by calling 605-987-2582.

Newton Hills State Park is located six miles south of Canton along County Road 135, or 12 miles east of Exit 56 from I-29. A park entrance license is required to enter the park.

For more information on South Dakota state parks and for a calendar of events, visit www.gfp.sd.gov or call 605-773-3391.

TROPHY SPOTLIGHT



LEFT: Kenneth Ohrazda of Yankton caught this 20.4-pound Buffalo carp on June 21. TOP: Alexi Griffith caught this catfish on Lake Yankton.



Justin Conway of Yankton caught this 5-pound, 11-ounce white bass below Gavin's Point Dam on June 2.



Brett Heine caught this 5-pound, 9-ounce walleye on June 15 in Yankton.

Iowa Teen Known As 'Deer Magnet'

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) — A central Iowa teen has earned the nickname "The Deer Magnet" after hitting five deer in the past year.

Seventeen-year-old Kacey Larson of Conrad says her string of bad luck began last July when she was driving home from her job at an ice cream shop. She saw the deer an instant before hitting it.

Larson's second collision happened a few months later, while she

was driving to church on a Sunday morning.

The streak continued. After Larson hit her fourth deer, her pastor's wife advised her to start praying before she got into a vehicle.

Larson says she was doing just that Friday when she hit her fifth deer. The crash totaled her minivan, and the air bag left bruises on her arms.

Larson says she cannot help asking: "Why me?"

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