

Of The Outdoors | Gary Howey

Consider Water Clarity When Choosing Crankbait

BY GARY HOWEY
Hartington, Neb.

Walking into any tackle department, looking for crankbaits, can be confusing. There are hundreds of them, numerous brands, shapes, sizes, designs and colors.

In our last article, we talked about the basics, in this column, we'll go into its little deeper, talking about choosing the right style and color of crankbait

If there is one thing that anglers do not always agree on, is the subject of lure color. Some swear that you can catch walleyes as long as your lure has one

color, chartreuse, while others use a multitude of colors and others who say color makes no difference.

There are times when the fish are suicidal; biting on anything, you throw at them, the bite prior to the arrival of a cold front. In my opinion, this is when color does not make a bit of difference when you can throw any colored bait and the fish will attack it.

However, there are times when water clarity, light and weather conditions make it difficult for fish to locate your bait. These are the times when lure color becomes very important. I have a couple of rules I follow when it comes to choosing the right color crankbait.

The first thing I do when I fish new water is to find out what the dominant baitfish is in the body of water. Once you learn what the fish primarily feed on, it is a good plan to match your crankbait shape, size and color to that lake or rivers main baitfish.

In the upper Midwest, some of the common baitfish include; gizzard shad, smelt, river shiners and alewife

These bait fish have a silver body. Therefore, in most cases, I will look for bait that resembles these species.

In some lakes, the main bait fish would be the perch or bluegill, so in those bodies of water, I would have a tendency to use a crankbait with similar colors.

As a diver, I have seen how fish react to different



GARY HOWEY PHOTO
Unnatural colored lures were the key when Team Outdoorsmen Adventures Member Scott Ulrich, Hartington, Nebraska, when fishing the turbid waters of Devils Lake, North Dakota.

color lures at different depths. It changes from clear to muddy and gradually gets worse as you go down stream towards Yankton.

When I am fishing up river, I will use a more natural color, especially when fishing in the shallower water. If I am fishing deeper, I may switch to a florescent colored lure.

There are times when even the clearest water will become muddied or turbid. On Lake Oahe, Sharpe and Francis Case on the Missouri River system, the wind blows and the waves slapping into the shore create a mud line. The fish will move up into the shallow water to feed and when I see this muddy water close to shore, muddying up the water top to bottom, I will switch to a gaudy fluorescent color to make my lure more visible in the muddied water.

Depending on how hard the wind is blowing into a shoreline, the mud line in the water flowing back from the shoreline into deeper water, the muddied water may only

be located on the top foot or so, where you may want to use a more natural color.

As with any bait, each individual will have to experiment a bit to find out which bait works best for him or her under certain conditions.

Like everyone, I have my favorite baits, those that have produced well for me and I carry an assortment of them with me, some that work best in clear water conditions and others for dirty or stained water.

Here are several of the crankbait colors I carry in my tackle box so I am ready for most fishing situations:
Clear Water: Smelt, Perch, Bluegill, Threadfin Shad, Crawdad

Dirty or Stained Water: Fire Tiger, Fire Craw, Clown, Chartreuse, Fluorescent Orange, Fluorescent Yellow

Each of us has their own ideas when it comes to crankbait color. If it works for you use it!
Just do not get in the rut that you use only one color

lure in clear, muddy and stained water, because you could be in for a lot of trolling, cranking, and very little catching.

Gary Howey, Hartington, Nebraska, is a former tournament angler, fishing and hunting guide. He is the Producer/Host of the award winning Outdoorsmen Adventures television series, seen on Fox affiliates throughout the upper Midwest. In the Yankton area, it airs on local channels 2 & 98 Saturday at 6:30 pm and Sunday at 7:00 am as well as on MIDCO Sports Network Thursday at 5:30 pm and Sunday at 10:00 am. He and Simon Fuller are the hosts of the Outdoor Adventures radio program on Classic Hits 106.3, ESPN Sports Radio 1570 in Southeastern South Dakota and KCHE 92.1 FM in Northwest Iowa. If you are looking for more outdoor information, check out www.outdoorsmenadventures.com and like Outdoorsmen Adventures on Facebook.

Additional grants were awarded for trail improvement projects at the following locations: Custer State Park, George S. Mickelson Trail, North Point Recreation Area Trail, Spearfish Falls Trail, Black Hills Snowmobile Trail System, Oahe Downstream OHV Area and the Black Hills National Forest for Black Fox Trail Rehabilitation.

"I am pleased to have the opportunity to award these grants to project sponsors around the state who have demonstrated a commitment to improving our communities, parks and recreation areas," said Gov. Daugaard. "Their efforts will be a benefit to South Dakota's future generations."

The Recreational Trails Program is funded by the Federal Highway Administration and administered in South Dakota by the Department of Game, Fish and Parks. The funds come from the Federal Highway Trust Fund and represent a portion of the motor fuel excise tax collected from non-highway recreational fuel use.

For more information on this program, contact Randy Kittle, grants coordinator, at 605.773.5490 or randy.kittle@state.sd.us.

OUTDOORS DIGEST

S.D. Man Elected To Ducks Unlimited's National Board Of Directors

MEMPHIS, Tenn. — Jeff Heidelberg, of Custer, South Dakota, was elected to Ducks Unlimited Inc.'s national board of directors during the organization's annual convention in St. Louis.

Heidelberg, the co-owner and operator of a ranch in Custer and a farm in Minnesota, has been a DU volunteer for 38 years. "My father taught me to give back for the enjoyment you get from outdoor activities like waterfowl hunting. I learned early on there was no better organization than Ducks Unlimited for me to focus my 'give back' activities," he said. "To serve on the DU board of directors is the ultimate honor and a great way to help conservation in the Prairie Pothole Region that I have had the life-long privilege to enjoy."

For a complete list of DU's volunteer board of directors, please visit www.ducks.org.

Recreational Trails Receive Funding

PIERRE — Gov. Dennis Daugaard has awarded Recreational Trails Program (RTP) funding to several cities, state parks and the Black Hills National Forest totaling approximately \$1.3 million. The five person citizen RTP Advisory Council reviewed the applications and made the recommendations to Gov. Daugaard. The federal assistance program provides up to 80 percent reimbursement for trail-related development and maintenance projects.

The following cities were awarded grants for trail construction and upgrades:

- Aberdeen – Moccasin Creek Recreational Trail, \$89,000
- Crooks – Sunset Park Walking Path, \$60,000
- Deadwood – Powerhouse Park Trail, \$50,000
- Fort Pierre – Recreational Trail North, \$64,444
- Huron – Memorial Park Trail Replacement, \$70,000
- Rapid City – Skyline Wilderness Area Natural Surface Trail, \$70,000

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S.D. State Parks Plan For Fun-Filled Weekend

PIERRE — No time to get away? Take a mini vacation at a South Dakota state park. Several special events offering activities for the entire family will take place at parks across the state.

- 35th Annual Sioux River Folk Festival, Newton Hills State Park near Canton, Friday, Aug. 1 through Sunday, Aug. 3. Newton Hills State Park is hosting three days of folk music, dancing and family fun during the annual Sioux River Folk Festival. Info: 605-987-2263, www.fotm.org
- Riverman/Riverwoman Sprint Triathlon, Farm Island Recreation Area near Pierre, Aug. 2, 7:40 a.m. CDT. Compete as an individual or as part of a team in this annual event. Take a 0.4-mile swim along swim beach, an 18-mile bike ride on SD Hwy 34, and a 3.5-mile run on the island trail. Info: 605-773-2885
- Bean Bag Tournery, Newton Hills State Park near Can-

ton, Aug. 2, 10 a.m. CDT. Bring your game face to this bean bag tournament! We have a limited number of bean bag sets, so first come, first served. All ages are welcome, and prizes will be awarded to both participants and winners. Info: 605-987-2263

- Kayaking for Fun, North Point Recreation Area near Pickstown, Aug. 2, 10 a.m. CDT. Learn how to kayak safely and efficiently. Kayaks will be provided. Bring your own personal floatation device, if possible. Pre-registration required: 605-487-7046
- Dutch Oven Cooking Demonstration, Roy Lake State Park near Lake City, Aug. 2, 3 p.m. CDT. Learn how to cook with a Dutch oven. Info: 605-448-5474
- Music in the Park: John and Susan McNeill, Chief White Crane Recreation Area near Yankton, Aug. 2, 7 p.m. CDT. Singing duo, John and Susan McNeill, share their tal-

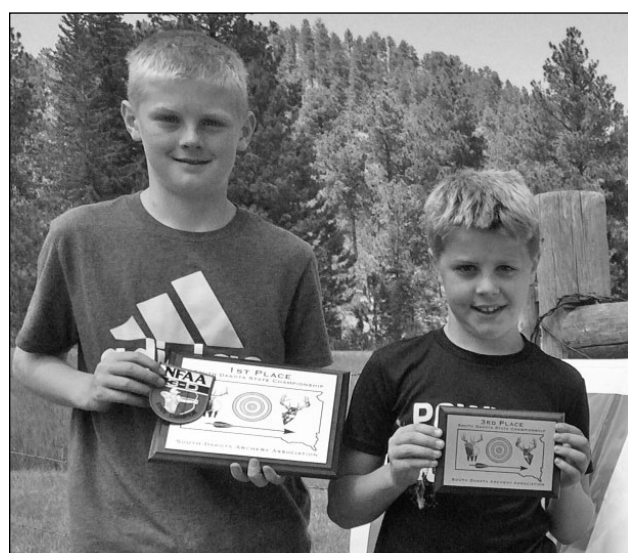
ents. Bring a lawn chair and enjoy the great music! Info: 605-668-2985

- Evening with the Owls, Oahe Downstream Recreation Area near Fort Pierre, Aug. 2, 8:30 p.m. CDT. Enjoy a walk and talk on South Dakota owls. Info: 605-223-7722
- Pedal to the Park, Oakwood Lakes State Park near Bruce, Aug. 3, 12:30 p.m. CDT. Begin at Sioux River Bicycle & bike to Oakwood Lakes State Park. Refreshments will be provided at the park. Return rides will not be furnished. Everyone is encouraged to bike back or arrange for a ride.

A park entrance license is required to enter all parks. Participants are encouraged to wear suitable shoes, dress for the weather and apply insect repellent.

For more information on South Dakota State Parks, please visit www.gfp.sd.gov or call 605-773-3391.

Archery Honors



SUBMITTED PHOTO
Cole (left) and Ben Rumsey earned honors at the South Dakota State 3-D Archery Shoot. Cole placed first in the youth male bowhunter division. Ben was third in the cub male bowhunter division.

Why Wait? Get Your Hunting Rifle Sighted In Now

BY PETE ZIMOWSKY
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(Boise, Idaho)

(MCT) If you're a hunter, but not a hard-core target shooter, you should visit a range a few times before heading out to hunt next fall. It only makes sense to be prepared when you get a shot at an animal.

If you want valuable practice, use the bench rest to ensure your rifle is properly sighted in, then practice shooting from sitting and kneeling positions that you are more likely to use while hunting.

That's harder to do in late summer and fall because the firing line is often full

Because of busy family and work schedules, some hunters wait to sight in right down to the wire until it's only a few days before opening day. I've been there and done that. I've even heard of some hunters trying to sight in their rifles at

deer camp the day before opening day.

Believe me, it's a lot better and reassuring to get some trigger time now. It's good to be familiar with your rifle, and the only way to do that is with a lot of shooting.

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AM 1450
MORNING COFFEE
WEEKDAYS MONDAY-FRIDAY

Monday, July 28
7:40 am Yankton City Manager (Amy Nelson)
8:20 am Hillcrest Pro-Am (Sean Riley)

Tuesday, July 29
7:40 am SE Job Link (Sheri Duke)
8:20 am MMC 5-K (Randy Fischer)

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