

OUTDOORS DIGEST

S.D. Gov. Daugaard Proclaims June As Great Outdoors Month

PIERRE — Gov. Dennis Daugaard has joined with states nationwide to proclaim June as Great Outdoors Month. In the proclamation, Gov. Daugaard states that a connection with nature is an essential component of our physical well-being — time outside combats obesity and diabetes, reduces stress levels, and decreases symptoms of Attention Deficit Disorder and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder.

Many opportunities for outdoor activities are provided by the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks in its efforts to expand and enhance state parks, protect our wildlife heritage, and create programs that introduce youngsters to the wonders of the outdoors. Several notable outdoor recreation opportunities will take place in June, including the following events:

- National Trails Day, June 2 — A day set aside to celebrate America's magnificent trail systems and their countless supporters and volunteers. Several state parks will be hosting trail-related events that day.
- National Fishing and Boating Week, June 2-10 — A national celebration of fishing and boating. National Fishing and Boating Week is the perfect reason to get out on the water and experience the joys of boating and fishing.
- Great American Backyard Campout, June 23 — An opportunity for everyone to re-live — or to experience for the first time — how much fun it is to spend a night sleeping under the stars and enjoying the sounds of nature. The Great American Backyard Campout is a national event that encourages individuals, youth, friends and families to camp out together for one night.
- Outdoor Expo, June 9-10 — The Fifth Annual South Dakota Outdoor Expo will be held at the State Fairgrounds in Huron. The Expo features hands-on activities aimed at introducing families to the many possibilities for recreation in South Dakota's outdoors. Events include a pond for kayaking, fishing activities, geocaching, activities for small children, shooting activities, and many more.
- Luce Pioneer Day, June 9 — Lake Herman State Park
- Becoming an Outdoor Family, June 22-24 — Lake Vermillion Recreation Area

Governor To Lift No-Boating Zone On Big Sioux River

PIERRE — The no-boating zone on a short stretch of the Big Sioux River in Minnehaha County that was enacted May 7 due to hazardous conditions that developed from a construction project has been rescinded by Gov. Dennis Daugaard, effective at noon June 1.

The City of Sioux Falls had been repairing portions of its sanitary sewer system between the Minnesota Avenue bridge and the Cliff Avenue bridge, resulting in hazardous boating conditions on that section of the Big Sioux River. The sanitary sewer system work has since been completed, and boating on the waterway may resume.

Fishermen Land Big Catfish In Creek Near Omaha

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — It's not a record breaker, but three fishermen are bragging about their catch — an 85-pound blue catfish in a creek near Omaha.

KETV-TV in Omaha says the friends landed the monster fish in Salt Creek on Tuesday. J.D. Herdrich credits not the lure, but the pink fishing pole he was using. He says after he caught the fish, he knew the pole was going to break, so they grabbed the line and hauled it in. It took about five minutes to get the fish to shore. Once the excitement settled, they weighed the fish with a hand scale. Then, they let it go.

The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission says the biggest blue catfish ever caught in Nebraska weighed just over 100 pounds.

Neb. Game And Parks Urges Safety While Boating

LINCOLN, Neb. — Boaters should not take safety for granted. Since May 19-25 is National Safe Boating Week, the Boating Safety Section of the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission suggests ways boaters may reduce the risk of incidents and help ensure a safe and enjoyable day on the water.

Wear a Life Jacket — Children under age 13 and anybody on a personal watercraft are required by law to wear a United States Coast Guard-approved personal flotation device. People being towed by a boat on skis, a tube, or other similar device also must wear a life jacket.

Avoid Alcohol — Boat operators can become impaired with less alcohol than motor vehicle drivers due to heat and dehydration. Boating Under the Influence is a criminal violation and is enforced actively in Nebraska.

Have All Required Safety Equipment — This will help boaters be prepared if an emergency occurs. Life jackets, throw cushions, fire extinguishers, and bailing devices are required on most boats. For a list of what is required on a boat, check out the 2012 Boating Guide at BoatSafeNebraska.org.

Be Wary of Surroundings — The best boat operators constantly are looking around for other boats, personal watercraft, swimmers, stumps and other hazards. Speeds in excess of 5 mph are prohibited if within 30 yards of any other vessel, swimming area or dock.

Take a Boating Safety Course — Anyone born after Dec. 31, 1985, who operates a motorboat or personal watercraft in Nebraska must have successfully completed the Nebraska boating safety course. Visit BoatSafeNebraska.org for a list of classes.

Minn. Man Pleads Guilty In Dead Snakes Case

MOORHEAD, Minn. (AP) — A Dilworth man has admitted allowing 32 snakes to freeze to death in an unheated storage unit last winter.

Fifty-year-old Henry Atherton pleaded guilty Thursday to one felony and two misdemeanor counts of mistreatment of animals.

Atherton had moved from Florida to Dilworth last summer. The Forum reports he said in court he "just couldn't find a place" for the snakes. He testified that he didn't intend for his snakes to die.

Atherton says he put the 32 ball pythons in containers and was keeping them in the Glyndon storage unit until he could find homes for them.

Authorities discovered the dead snakes last January after someone reported a rotten odor. Atherton says he had planned to bury the snakes in the spring.

Sentencing is set for July 9.

OF THE OUTDOORS | GARY HOWEY

Listen For That “Ba-Rump” Noise

BY GARY HOWEY

Hartington, Neb.

The loud boisterous call echoed across the water, I instantly knew it was the call of a male bullfrog.

Bullfrog hunting isn't an outdoor activity that you hear a lot about in our area, but there are many folks, including myself who secretly slide their boat into ponds, backwater bays or walk along the bank with a long rod quietly searching the shoreline for the big frogs.

Generally, bullfrogs are they're fairly quiet critters during the day, but as the sun starts to set, especially during the spring, they become very vocal, trying to

out bellow or out croak other males, advertising their presents to any females in the area.

Among the largest of all frogs, bullfrogs are solitary creatures and very territorial, they rarely spend much time around other frogs except to fight over a territory or to mate.

Its life is hard from the beginning, a fight to survive, which begins when it's one of the 20,000 eggs, laid by the

female frog, which attach in huge sheets to the underside of aquatic vegetation. As with any thing in the wild, the eggs and tadpoles become easy an easy meal for fish and birds. Tadpoles are easy prey for the larger, stronger predators such as bass, herons and other critters that frequent the lakes, ponds and streams that the bullfrog calls home.

They can spend their lives as a tadpole up to two years, those that stay, as those that remain tadpoles longer will generally be larger frogs. Bullfrogs have been known to live over six years.

Bullfrogs are carnivorous, preying on any animal it can overpower and stuff in its mouth, which includes rodents, small turtles, snakes, frogs (including bullfrogs), birds, small mammals and insects.

Male bullfrogs also have to fight to protect its territory as adult males are very aggressive and will defend their territories, which can be up to 30 yards of shoreline, by physically wrestling with any male frog that wanders into it's domain.

In the fall in order to survive the winter, bullfrogs burrow into the soft mud or, creating a cavity in which they hibernate through the winter, emerging in the spring.

Black Hills An Alluring Stop For Turkey Hunters

BY DOUG SMITH

(c)2012 the Star Tribune (Minneapolis)

IN THE BLACK HILLS — The gobbler appeared in an instant, just over my shoulder, 20 yards away.

I was scouting for birds, 15 minutes into a four-day wild turkey hunt in the Black Hills, and had mimicked the call of a hen. A real hen chirped back.

I barely had time to slip on a camouflage face mask and sit against a tree when two hens and the tom emerged from the woods. The tom, sporting about a 5-inch beard, strolled into the open, presenting an easy, point-blank shot.

My heart pounded.

You'd think a guy who had sat in a turkey blind for 14 hours for two days last month on the Minnesota youth turkey hunt and never saw a bird — hen, jake or tom — would seize the opportunity.

You'd think a guy who never got a shot during his last Black Hills hunt would relish a tom with a 5-inch beard.

And you'd think a guy who knows that two-thirds of Minnesota's turkey hunters fail to bag a bird each spring would slowly raise his 12-gauge and squeeze the trigger.

You'd be wrong.

I passed up the shot.

We were hunting along the Wyoming-South Dakota border, with licenses in both states. I didn't want my hunt there to be over before I had a chance to even explore the area. And while I'm not a trophy hunter — I've shot jakes (young male turkeys) before — I figured I might as well wait for a long-beard.

Besides, it appeared there were plenty of birds around. Eight more hens came out of the woods following the tom.

All soon disappeared — along with my common sense.

Black Hills adventure



PHOTO: LARRY MYHRE

Bullfrogs are found in numerous bodies of water including stock dams, ponds. Lakes and rivers and can be identified by their loud boisterous call.

The traditional way of hunting them is to paddle or pole silently by canoe or johnboat in streams or swamps at night; when the frog call is heard; a light is shined on the frog to temporarily inhibit it. The frog will not jump into deeper water as long as movement is slow and deliberate.

Legal means of taking bullfrogs in Nebraska is by hand, hand net or hook and line.

Years ago, when it was legal to gig or spear frogs, this would be how I'd get my first bullfrog experience when good friend Fred Bartling and I decided to give bullfrogging a try.

One dark evening, we slid my 10-foot wooden johnboat into a small pond south of town. We launched the boat and with flashlight in one hand, frog gig in the other along with a burlap gunnysack used to hold the frogs once we had them in the boat we worked our way out onto the pond, listening intently for the “Ba-Rump” call of the frog.

Once we located a frog by it's call, Fred paddled slowly across the pond as I pushed the beam of my flashlight out towards the shore where the frog was located. Once locating the eyes of the frog that protruded just above the water, we zeroed in and took out our first frog, a plump dark green frog that would become part of our frog leg supper.

With a goodly number of jumping frogs in our gunnysack, we headed home to skin them out, getting them ready for the great frog leg feast we wee planning.



DOUG SMITH/MINNEAPOLIS STAR TRIBUNE/MCT

Turkey hunters get spectacular views while on the hunt in the Black Hills of South Dakota and Wyoming in May 2012.

Tom Kalahar, Ben Hillesheim and I made the nine-hour drive west earlier this month. We set up camp in a 12-foot-by-20-foot wall tent, complete with a wood stove, not far from Spearfish, S.D., in a small U.S. Forest Service campground.

Kalahar and Hillesheim believe in the comforts of home. They brought a generator to power electric lights _ and a small freezer for our turkeys.

"Oh, we gotta have a freezer," Kalahar said.

Hunting the Black Hills is an adventure, with its rugged rock outcrops, sweet scent of ponderosa pines and breathtaking vistas. In early May, the newly sprouted aspen leaves were florescent green, accenting the dark-green pines. Deer were everywhere.

The Black Hills National Forest covers 1.25 million acres. A hunter in good shape can hike endless miles of rugged woods, ridges and valleys.

"In Minnesota I know every nook and cranny where I hunt," Kalahar said. "Here, I get to ex-

plore."

And there are turkeys _ the Merriam's subspecies, with ivory-colored tips on the tail feathers.

The problem is finding them in such a vast expanse.

Turkeys galore

After my opening day misadventure, we drove a forest trail about a mile distant, then separated. I wasn't 10 minutes away when I heard a shotgun blast. Kalahar had climbed a nearby pine-covered ridge and called.

"I got an immediate gobbler," he said. He hustled closer and called again, and once again the bird gobbled.

"All of a sudden, there he was," he said. He fired once at about 40 yards, and toted the bird back to the truck. Sometimes it's just that easy.

"I tell you, boys, it doesn't get much better than this," Kalahar said.

We saw other birds on the stretch of road, so the next day we returned. Hillesheim set up not far from where Kalahar had bagged his bird. Just a half-hour

after legal shooting time began, a gobbling tom responded to Hillesheim's calls.

"He came right up a deer trail and was 25 yards out, displaying. It's a rush when you hear a gobble that close."

That bird, too, ended up in the freezer.

A bird in the hand ...

I hunted hard, covering lots of territory: Near the top of a 6,000-foot ridge, covered with wild flowers. Along a gurgling brook that snaked through a valley. Under a canopy of ponderosa pines.

But I spotted few birds and heard fewer gobbles. Which forced me to replay my first-day decision.

"I bet that gobbler with the 5-inch beard looks pretty good now," Kalahar said with a smile near trip's end.

Yes, it did.

We journeyed home a day early, driven out by thunderstorms, with two birds. We never fired our guns in South Dakota, though we spotted three toms one afternoon. Still, the Black Hills is alluring.

"I'll definitely come back," Hillesheim said.

You'd think I might get sympathy at home when I relayed my tale of the bird not bagged.

You'd be wrong.

"What were you thinking?" my wife asked.

Fried Frog Legs

- 2 to 2 1/2 pounds small frog legs
 - 1/3 cup lemon juice
 - Crushed ice
 - 1/3 cup milk
 - 2 eggs – separated
 - 2 teaspoons vegetable oil
 - Salt and pepper
 - 2 cups of all purpose flour or your favorite batter
 - Vegetable oil for deep frying
- Wash frog legs thoroughly. Place in a large bowl, sprinkle with lemon juice and cover with crushed ice. Refrigerate for 1 to 3 hours. In a small bowl, mix together milk, egg yolks, and 2 teaspoons oil. Beat egg whites until stiff; fold into milk and egg yolk mixture. Sprinkle frog legs with salt and pepper; dip each in milk-egg mixture, then dredge in flour. Heat vegetable oil in a deep fryer or skillet to 375. Fry frog legs until golden brown. When you remove the frog legs transfer to paper towels to drain.
- Serves 4 to 6.

frogs tongue to jump of it's mouth, attacking anything that's red.

A small red popper works well as does a bare hook with a piece of red yarn or cloth.

In many areas, frog legs are a delicacy, especially down south. I've eaten and enjoyed fried frog legs numerous times since; they have the consistency of a white fish but taste like, you guessed it “fried chicken.”

The Nebraska bullfrog season is open from Aug. 15-Oct. 31 with a Nebraska fishing permit required to take bullfrogs.

In Nebraska, the bag limit is eight frogs per person with a possession limit of 16. The frogs must measure four inches from snout to vent or be released. It's legal to use artificial light while hunting bullfrogs.

In South Dakota, the bullfrog season is open year round with a daily limit of 15 and a possession limit of 30. A South Dakota fishing permit is also required to take Bullfrogs.

Gary Howey, Hartington, Neb. is the President of Outdoorsmen Productions, Producer/Host of the Outdoorsmen Adventures television series, which can be seen throughout South Dakota on KELO MYUTV Digital 11.2. For more information on the outdoors can be found at www.outdoorsmenadventures.com.

TROPHY SPOTLIGHT



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Sally and Nate Quatier along with Mason Steffen and Andrew Gustad caught this bunch of Missouri River Bluegill over Memorial Day weekend.

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