

OUTDOORSUPDATE

OF THE OUTDOORS:

Youth Make Outdoors More Enjoyable

BY GARY HOWEY
Hartington, Neb.

Over the years, I've found that spending time in the outdoors has become much more precious to me.

It may be that it's the fact that I'm away from the office and the racket that's associated with it.

To me, it's my escape from the everyday doldrums and a chance to get back to my roots.

While growing up, I was fortunate to have mentors to teach me about the outdoors. My father Cal liked to hunt and fish when he had time; it was my Grandma & Grandpa Menkveld that did a lot of fishing and some hunting.

Then there was Glen Matteson, our neighbor across the street, to us kids he was an outdoor guru as there wasn't anything in the outdoors that he didn't know about.

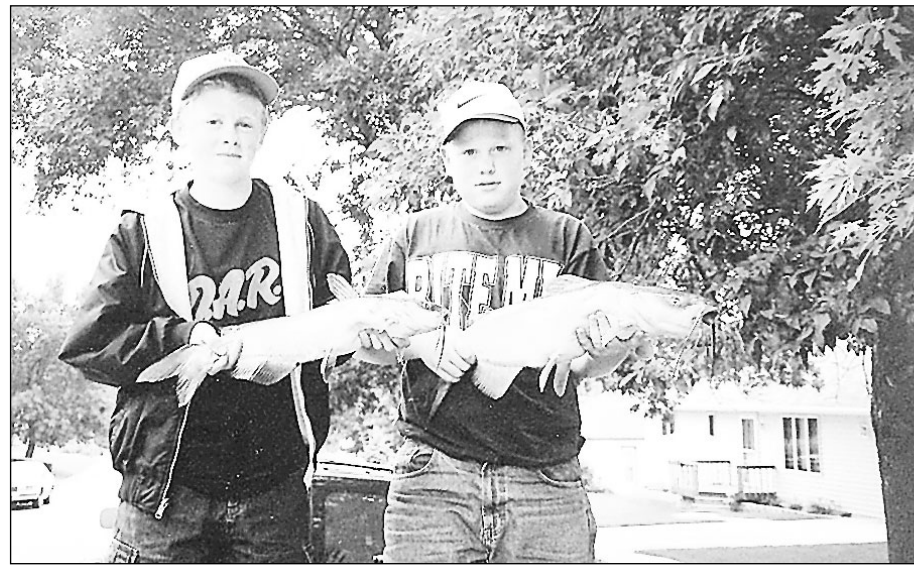
Because of these influences on our young lives, we were bitten by the outdoor bug and spent as much time as we could get away with, wandering along the shores of Pelican Lake.

I can honestly say that there wasn't much in the outdoors that we didn't try! From fishing to hunting and everything in between, we did all the things kids could do in the outdoors.

We were truly fortunate to have adults that influenced us, getting us interested in the outdoors.

Things have changed considerably in today's world! Back while I was growing up, it seemed like most people hunted and fished as it was just part of growing up in the upper Midwest.

It always seemed that people living in the rural areas were closer to the land;



You can learn a lot by introducing a kid to fishing, hunting and the outdoors. These two young fishermen caught this catfish earlier this year.

they knew that hamburger came from a cow and pork came from a hog, not from McDonalds.

They knew hunting and fishing was part of our American Heritage and a huge part of the wildlife management program.

Sadly, today those who hunt and fish are the minority and as the minority we need to get our behinds off the couch and start promoting our sports.

There are getting to be fewer and fewer folks, who will take or have the time to introduce a youngster to the outdoors.

We can no longer sit by, believing our sports are gaining members and there are people out there that will teach others about the outdoors.

It's up to individuals like us and other members of the hunting and fishing fraternity to show youngsters all the great things that the outdoors has to offer.

How about pitching in by volunteering to help with youth programs run by

our Game, Fish & Parks Dept. You're not expected to know everything there is to know about the outdoors, you're going to be talking with youngsters that are eager to learn about the outdoors and looking for every little piece of information on the outdoors they can find.

No one knows everything about the outdoors and those that think they do aren't the type of individuals you want to have as teachers any way!

All you need to do is to get a kid out and show him how to catch a fish, camp or hunt.

They don't need to catch a monster fish, tag a trophy buck or camp in the Rockies, they just need to get off the couch and away from the computer and television. In fact, it's best if you start kids out slow, showing them how to catch bullheads or bluegill, to plink at targets and perhaps do a backyard campout. Watching a youngster that you intro-

duced to the sport just enjoying a few of the many things the outdoors has to offer is one of the finest feelings in the world.

You've not only made yourself feel better, you made some youngsters' day and helped introduce another to the outdoors!

Kids are looking for something to do and because there are so many things they can get into that aren't good for them, they need an alternative so they aren't out getting in trouble or spending all of their time parked in front of a TV or playing video games on the computer.

I really enjoy seeing a new angler catching a fish or a young hunter tagging his first turkey, because I know that we've added another outdoorsmen or woman to our sport.

Another way to support the outdoors is to support the many conservation organizations that we have.

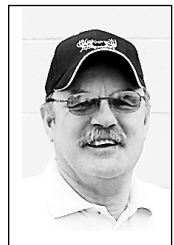
Pheasants Forever, Whitetails Unlimited, Ducks Unlimited, the National Wild Turkey Federation as well as local sportsmen's organizations are all tremendous conservation groups, doing an excellent job of promoting the outdoors while working to increase habitat and wildlife populations.

These groups all have mentor programs where: outdoors skills and the love of the outdoors can be passed along to the younger generation.

It's up to you and me, the outdoorsmen and women to help promote the outdoors and to introduce someone new to all Mother Nature has to offer as these are the future of our sport!

You may be surprised as the kids may not be the only ones to learn something!

Gary Howey, Hartington, Neb., is a former tournament angler, hunting and fishing guide. If you'd like more information on the outdoors go to www.outdoorsmenadventures.com.



Gary Howey

Good Country Isn't Hard To Find In Quetico

BY SAM COOK
(c) 2010, Duluth News Tribune
(Duluth, Minn.)

QUETICO PROVINCIAL PARK, Ontario — We came upon the bull moose while we were paddling back to camp through a tamarack bog. He was big and dark, growing the furry beginnings of thick antlers.

Four of us, in two canoes, were returning from a few hours of lake trout fishing in another lake. The canoes trailed stringers with our supper swimming along behind.

The moose gave us the typical bewildered gaze at first. Then he must have figured that something wasn't right about four stubs of humans riding in 18-foot slivers of Kevlar. It didn't help that we were upwind.

He waded the small creek, then splashed without apparent effort across the floating bog. His coat was black and glossy, his head and muzzle huge. We tried a couple of grunts, and he stopped momentarily. Then, unconvinced, he moved on and was swallowed up by the new green of the tamaracks.

We resumed paddling down the creek.

"Moose. Beaver. Trout. This is good country," my paddling partner said.

For four days, we were sharing this country with the moose and the beaver and the trout. The trout — some of them, at least — were giving more than their share. We fried up a few of them for supper on two nights.

It is the lake trout that provide the stated purpose for this early-May trip into Canada's canoe country. The season opens there Jan. 1 and continues through to fall. This time of year, the fish are in shallow water, where they can be caught by trolling plugs or spoons.

Come summer, they'll be deep again, still catchable but a little more work.

A lot of old-timers love their lake trout. "Landlocked salmon," some of them call the lake trout, for reasons I've never understood. I used to see an old man at the grocery store on Sundays, and nearly always he wanted to talk about lake trout.

Some years, the lakers don't come without a sacrifice. We understand, going in, that fishing canoe-country lake trout in early May might require mild suffering. The water is cold. The weather can be raw, and that's exactly what we encountered. The wind blew from the east and the northwest, hard. We awoke to a trace of snow one morning. It was the kind of weather that made you glad you weren't reaching into a minnow bucket on a regular basis.

But to be honest, I think all of us embraced the conditions. We made wood. We built big fires and sat close to them.

Moose. Beaver. Trout. And wolves. Good country.

Lake Michigan Filled With Salmon, Thus Far

BY ERIC SHARP
(c) 2010, Detroit Free Press

DETROIT — Prospects for Lake Michigan's salmon fishing this summer are good to excellent, with plenty of fish, good weights early in the season and a baitfish supply that should keep the game fish going for at least a couple of more years.

The only setback has been weather, with windy frontal systems raking the big lake nearly every weekend.

Denny Blue, who runs True Blue charters out of Onekama, Mich., said, "Just about every day we've got wind or rain or something. But when the boats can get out, they're catching fish. People did very well on brown trout in March. Now it's a mix of kings, lake trout and browns."

"They had a tournament at Michigan City, Ind., (at the southern end of Lake Michigan) last weekend, and they caught a lot of lakers but fewer cohos than usual. They did get several fish over 15 pounds and one over 18, which is good for this early in the year. And they have caught some 18- to 20-pound kings between Onekama and Manistee. This fish will be 25 pounds by July."

In the late 1990s, the Department of Natural Resources and Environment realized that natural salmon reproduction from streams on the Michigan side of the lake was at least equal to the number of fish being planted, and that there was a danger the lake could become so overpopulated by salmon that the prey base would crash.

Blue said the DNRE cut the salmon plants in half a few years ago, and it has paid dividends.



Prospects for Lake Michigan's salmon fishing this summer are good to excellent, with plenty of fish, good weights early in the season and a baitfish supply that should keep the game fish going for at least a couple of more years.

"Now there's plenty of food for the salmon, and they're healthier," he said. "It turned out to have been the smart thing to do."

Jim Dexter, a resource manager for the DNRE, said, "The reports we're getting are that the fish are even healthier than last year, when they were up several pounds from the year before. They're already catching chinooks up to 18 pounds, and they're catching chinooks as far north as Manistee. That's really unusual for this early."

"Last year we had the highest catch rates in 14 years. There's no reason that it shouldn't continue to produce good numbers."

While overall baitfish numbers dropped again this spring, Dexter said the salmon still have plenty of alewives from hatches

in 2003 and 2005 that survived pretty well. "The last couple of years, the alewives haven't done anything (in terms of reproduction), but that's pretty normal," he said. "You don't need a big alewife hatch every year. One great year class can sustain the (salmon) fishery for years. That happened back in the early 2000s, when we had several years of excellent salmon fishing that lived off the 1998 alewife hatch."

Asked if he thought the salmon fishing would hold up next year, Dexter said, "I'll only go one year at a time. If the alewives fail to produce a good hatch again next year, I'll start to worry."

Ken Neidlinger, who runs Silverking Fishing Charters out of St. Joseph near the southern end

of Lake Michigan, said, "Most of the boats are doing well. We're getting chinook and coho and a few steelhead and lakers. You could get a lot more lakers if you slowed down and fished for them, but most people want salmon. I hope it is like last year. The kings were 4-5 pounds heavier than in 2008, and instead of 3-pound cohos, they were 4-6 pounds."

"The only problem has been the weather. It's been unbelievably windy. Today (Friday), it's blowing about 35 knots and 32 degrees."

Ed Rasmussen is a Chicago angler who fishes the Michigan shoreline from South Haven to Ludington, and this year he has managed to make three trips in his new 24-foot center console.

"It's been really good," he said. "I'm a salesman and work out of a home office, so when I see a good weather window I can call a couple of fishing buddies and be out on the lake the next day."

"Our first trip was out of South Haven, and we landed nine kings and a dozen cohos in less than 6 hours. We mostly fished 120 feet of water, and we were marking fish all the time. I was kind of surprised that we didn't see more fish closer to shore, but we didn't see any bait inshore, either, so that's probably the answer."

Neidlinger said, "Usually at this time of year we see alewives right in off the pier heads. But this year they've been out in 70, 80 feet of water. The same thing happened last year. They just never came in."

Asked why he thought that happened, Neidlinger said, "Beats me."

This Florida Captain Skilled At Catching — 'Hunting' — Bonefish

BY STEVE WATERS
(c) 2010, Sun Sentinel

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. — Capt. Jorge Valverde reads a flat like an IRS auditor reads a tax return: His keen eyes don't miss a thing.

So when the sun popped out from behind a mass of clouds and lit up Biscayne Bay, Valverde was able to see a couple of faint muds, which are signs of feeding bonefish.

Seconds later, Valverde saw three shadowy figures swimming 30 feet from his perfectly positioned flats skiff.

He cast a live shrimp in the direction the fish were heading. Two of the fish veered away, but the third bonefish charged in, picked up the shrimp and swam off. When Valverde felt the line accelerate off the spinning reel, he closed the reel's bail, pointed the 7 and a half-foot rod at the fish and lifted the rod tip when the line came tight.

What happened next is what every bonefish addict lives for — the fish streaked across the flat, ripping 10-pound braided line off the reel.

"I don't think fishing's the right word for what we do," Valverde said after tagging and releasing the bonefish, our second of the day. "We're hunting the fish."

Few anglers hunt bonefish as skillfully as Valverde, who guides for bonefish, tarpon, permit and sharks in Biscayne Bay and Florida Bay (visit lowplaces-guideservice.com).

In addition to his phenomenal eyesight, Valverde always seems to know where bonefish are likely to appear on a flat given its layout, the stage of the tide and the weather conditions. He also lets the bonefish dictate his tactics, rather than heading the so-called experts who offer absolutes, such as bonefish always feed into the current.

Our first bonefish — Valverde hooked it and I reeled it — was caught while it swam with the falling tide and into a southeast-

erly wind of 15-20 mph.

That we had caught any bonefish was a testament to Valverde. It had been raining when he left his home in Cooper City that morning. The cloudy skies looked like they might drench us as Valverde motored across the bay from the Biscayne National Park boat ramps to some flats where we'd be somewhat protected from the stiff winds.

The sun peeked out from behind the clouds every now and then, but the bonefish we saw were not interested in eating. So Valverde ran north to a flat where the tide would be falling sooner and the light might be better.

"I was hoping we could get past those clouds and we did," he said.

In short order we saw a stingray, a small sea turtle and a ballyhoo. As soon as the tide turned and started going out, sharks and bonefish began appearing.

We caught and released two lemon sharks and a bonnethead

shark casting shrimp to them, which Valverde said makes it easier to deliver a good cast when bonefish show up.

"You may not get a lot of practice casting on bonefish," said Valverde, noting that bonefish are less tolerant of bad casts than sharks. "You may get only five shots."

Lemons and bonnetheads give you the opportunity to make the practice casts. I use it as a training tool. When people catch (sharks), they say, 'This isn't bad.' Sharks jump and run out line and most of the time they're cooperative."

When a bonefish cooperates, it gets your heart pumping and your knees shaking. But just when you think a bonefish is going to act a certain way, it might do something else, which is why catching a bonefish is so rewarding. And why Valverde always expects the unexpected.

"I don't make the rules," Valverde said. "I just play the game."

OUTDOOR REPORT

Captain Norm's Walleye Classic Set For June 5

The inaugural Captain Norm's Walleye Classic will be held on Saturday, June 5, at Lewis and Clark Lake in Yankton.

There is a limit of 49 two-person teams. For more information, call 665-4271.

NEN Archers To Host Two Tournaments

HARTINGTON, Neb. — Northeast Nebraska Archers will host three separate tournaments later this summer at the outdoor archery range, located three miles east of Hartington, Neb. on Highway 84.

The first tournament will be held June 5-6, followed by a second on Aug. 14-15. There will also be a Shannon Trails Team Archery Shoot-Tournament on Sunday, Aug. 22.

Registration is scheduled for 8 a.m.-2 p.m. on both weekends for the first two events, which will feature 50 shots on wooded and sand-pit terrain.

The Shannon Trails Team Archery Shoot-Tournament will feature an adult division, and two divisions for youth, 8-12 and 13-15.

Concessions will be available at the site.

More information can be found on-line at www.nenarchers.com, or by contacting Kevin Millikan at fin-spurs@hotmail.com or 402-373-2713.

S.D. Kayak Challenge May 29-30

The South Dakota Kayak Challenge will be held on the Missouri River on May 29-30.

This will be a marathon kayak race from Yankton to Sioux City, Iowa, in 36 hours.

For more information, contact Steven Dahlmeier at 605-864-9011 or [e-mail steven@sdkayakchallenge.org](mailto:steven@sdkayakchallenge.org).

More info can be found online at www.sdkayakchallenge.org.

Archery Center To Offer Women's Beginner Courses

The Easton Archery Center will offer a four-week beginners' course for women age 18 and up, beginning Monday, May 17.

Classes will run from 5:30-6:30 p.m. each Monday from May 17 to June 14, with May 31 off for Memorial Day. Archery equipment will be provided.

Class size is limited. For more information, contact the Easton Archery Center, 800 Archery Lane, or call 260-9279.

GFP Application Needed For Fishing Tournaments, Special Events

PIERRE — Fishing tournament organizers in South Dakota need to make sure that they have filled out the proper Game, Fish and Parks Department paperwork when planning their events.

Applications for fishing tournaments and special events must be filed with GFP no later than 30 days before the events are held.

"During that 30 days, the Department can collect the necessary signatures and take care of any special requirements," said Dana Ertz, GFP special events permits coordinator. "Some events will require a proof of insurance or a special waiver."

Ertz added that it is important to use the current 2010 application because it is date-sensitive.

The 2010 application includes important information for tournament organizers, such as the dates during the year when fishing tournaments are not allowed to be held, as well as dates when salmon and walleye catch-and-release tournaments are restricted.

Completing the event paperwork as soon as possible helps all of the parties involved avoid problems.

Neb. Lottery Gives Hunters Shot At 4-Species Tag

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission has set up a lottery for hunters to win a permit for four species.

A \$25 application to the Nebraska Super Tag Lottery gives hunters a chance to win a tag for 2010 and 2011. It has a limit of one elk, one deer, one antelope and two turkeys.

July 2 is the application deadline. Hunters may submit only one entry.

The winning entry will be drawn at the July meeting of the Nebraska Game and Parks Board of Commissioners.

To enter the lottery, visit the [parks commission website, OutdoorNebraska.org](http://parks.commission.nebraska.gov).