

GARY HOWEY | OF THE OUTDOORS

Smallmouth Bass: Dynamite In A Compact Package

BY GARY HOWEY
Outdoorsmen Productions LLC

The first smallmouth bass I tangled with was several years ago, I was guiding on the Missouri River above Lewis & Clark Lake and was very impressed with the fighting ability of these bronze battles. To this day, it amazes me with its hard charging dives and aerial acrobatics it's known for.

It's been said that a good smallmouth population, which we have in the Missouri River system and the lakes in Northeast South Dakota are a good indicator of a healthy environment.

The Nebraska

State record was a smallmouth that came from the Missouri River in Knox County that weighed 7 pound 4-ounce caught by Dennis Swanson. The South Dakota

Gary HOWEY

state record a 6-pound 9-ounce smallmouth was caught in Lake Poinsett by Darin Laue. The world record Smallmouth, a real bruiser was caught on Dale Hollow Reservoir, Tennessee in 1955 and weighed 11 pounds 15 ounces.

Smallmouth, once hooked are a lot to handle as anglers will have their hands full as smallmouth will dive deep, goes airborne and do a tail walk across the surface, putting the toughest equipment to test.

Smallmouth Bass are members of the Sunfish family, such as the largemouth bass and bluegill. Members of this family, unlike many other species of fish that are random spawners are nests builders. Nests are made by the male using his tail to fan out a depression or nest for the eggs to be deposited. Once the eggs are fertilized, the female moves off to recuperate while the males of this family guard the nest until the fingerlings are big enough to fend for themselves.

Pre-spawn begins when temperatures hit the high 50's, this is when the male moves shallow, into 2 to 5 feet of water looking for a food source, and at the same time looking for a nesting location. They will build their nests in a wide variety of depths, with some as shallow as 10 inches, down to a depth of 10'. Water clarity and bottom content have a lot to do with the depth nests will be located with the deepest nests I've seen being 8 foot, which was made in super clear water.

Smallmouth spawn earlier than their cousin the largemouth bass with spawning activity beginning after several consistent warm days when temps reach 62 to 64 degrees, when the male starts looking for a suitable site to build his nest. As the water temperature reaches 70 degrees, some smallmouth may begin to spawn.

If you've never gone after smallmouth bass, you're missing it! Unfortunately, some anglers are "one species fisherman" and think that the only fish worth catching are walleyes, feeling that smallmouth simply get in the way of their walleye fishing.

It's true that smallmouth are more aggressive than walleyes and can be found in many of the same areas as walleyes, but these beautiful bulldogs of the deep don't directly compete with



Missouri River Smallmouth: Team Outdoorsmen Adventures member Joel Vasek, Geddes, with a good smallmouth taken from Lake Francis Case.

the walleyes.

Smallmouth, much like Walleyes are schooling fish and where you find one, you're bound to find a whole herd. Like other species of bass, they'll relate to structure: points, rock piles, drop offs and the river, where current is present in the slack water behind sandbars and downed timber.

Smallmouth can be taken in numerous ways including: live bait rigs, crankbaits, jigs and with plastic worms.

I enjoy pitching a small crankbait or small spinner bait up into the shoreline rocks, pockets in cattails, back water and other structure and then retrieve it slowly. Smallmouth in the river will hang out along the shoreline, behind the rocks and in the pockets along the cattails where beaver and other critters have entered the water, creating a small pocket in the reeds where the smallmouths can set in wait for an insect, frog or crawfish to drop in for lunch.

Like the Walleye, Smallmouth are predators and will locate in close proximity to their food source, which can be crayfish, shad, minnows and other small species of fish.

Once you locate their food source, you can bet that the Smallmouth won't be too far away.

In the upper Midwest, Smallmouth are found in many of the Glacial Lakes of Minnesota and South Dakota as well as in the Missouri River system that forms the boundary between Nebraska and South Dakota.

Unlike other species of fish that don't put up much of a fight once hooked, the Smallmouth will fight hard and long, so your drag had best be adjusted properly, your knots well tied and you'd better be prepared for an extended battle.

Since they're so aggressive, it's pretty easy to over fish them and by continually taking home limits of fish, the population can be hurt, so selective harvest and a good dose of catch and release are important.

It's a fact that fishing for Smallmouth Bass in the upper

Midwest is as good as it gets with three-pound fish being fairly common.

If you're looking for some excellent fishing, give Smallmouth Bass fishing a try because pound per pound, there are no harder fighting and more exciting fish to go after.

Gary Howe, Hartington, Neb., is the president of Outdoorsmen Productions LLC and the producer of the award winning Outdoorsmen Adventures television series. For more information on the outdoors go to www.outdoorsmenadventures.com

OUTDOORS SPOTLIGHT



Brady Dangler shot his first turkey on April 9 in western South Dakota. The bird weighed 19.5 pounds.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

SPORTS AROUND THE CLOCK

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ASK THE EXPERTS

Family Medicine

Q Which SPF should I use when choosing a sunscreen?

A The Sun Protection Factor (SPF) displayed on the sunscreen label ranges greatly and refers to the product's ability to screen or block out the sun's harmful rays. For example, if you use a sunscreen with an SPF 15, you can be in the sun 15 times longer than you can without sunscreen before burning. With so many brands of sunscreen available, selecting the right sunscreen can be difficult. Dermatologists strongly recommend using a sunscreen with an SPF 15 or greater year-round for all skin types. If you are fair skinned and sunburn easily, you may want to select a sunscreen with a higher SPF to provide additional protection. Also choose a "broad-spectrum" sunscreen that protects against UVB and UVA radiation. How well the sunscreen stays on the skin after swimming, bathing or perspiring is just as important as the SPF level. The FDA considers a product "water resistant" if it maintains its SPF level after 40 minutes of water exposure. A product is considered "waterproof" if it maintains its SPF level following 80 minutes of exposure to water. Sunscreens should be used daily if you are going to be in the sun for more than 20 minutes.

Statistics indicate that one in every five Americans will develop skin cancer at some point during their lifetime. Five or more sunburns during your lifetime doubles your risk of developing skin cancer. Sun protection is especially important in children because sunburns in early life can lead to skin cancer in adulthood.

Regular skin examinations are important in the early detection of skin cancer. If you have questions or concerns about your skin or have noticed changes, schedule an appointment today at Lewis & Clark Family Medicine.

1101 Broadway, Suite 103A
Morgen Square, Yankton, 260-2100

Brandi Pravecak, CNP
L&C Specialty Hospital

Jeffrey Johnson, M.D.

LEWIS & CLARK FAMILY MEDICINE, P.C.

Chiropractic

Q Why does chiropractic use nutrition?

A Traditionally, chiropractic has included nutrition and patient education to work through individual problems. More research shows the connection between diet and disease in the way that food can create different reactions in the body. By understanding how certain foods react in our body, we can 'reset' our body's reaction with alternate choices. Now more than ever, pieces to the health 'puzzle' are easier to apply. It is exciting to know that by applying new practices, we can change how our muscles and joints respond to our own activity. We can set and meet goals of wellness of the body with better health practices.

Sheila Fitzgerald, DC

first chiropractic CENTER

2507 Fox Run Parkway,
Yankton, SD, 665-8073

Ear, Nose & Throat

Q Dr. Rumsey, last week I lost hearing in my right ear. What can or should I do?

A Well sir, this doesn't happen very often, but when it does the only thing you can do is see your physician as soon as possible. Studies indicate beginning treatment within 10 days of the loss is your best chance to see the greatest recovery. Roughly 4,000 Americans suffer sudden onset sensorineural hearing loss. The loss typically occurs over a period of several hours to 3 days. Spontaneous recovery can occur within two weeks, but is only experienced by 30 to 60 percent of patients. Patients who begin a treatment of oral corticosteroids within 10 days of the loss have shown to have increased percentage of full recovery within a month. So don't delay. See your physician right away. I wish you the best and pray for your full recovery.

Jeffrey J. Liudahl, M.D.
Matthew Rumsey, Au.D., CCC-A
Professional Office Pavilion,
Suite 2800, 409 Summit, Yankton
665-6820 • 888-515-6820 • www.yanktonent.com

Yankton Ear, Nose & Throat

Fitness/Health

Q What is the cause of muscle soreness and how is it best relieved?

A The muscle soreness noticed by most after a good workout is called delayed onset muscle soreness (DOMS). It is generally an aching type of pain and tenderness that is felt in the muscles hardest hit by activity completed about 24-48 hours prior. Research suggests it is caused by micro-tears that occur naturally during a hard workout. These are not a dangerous occurrence but a part of making the muscles stronger and the reason you should never lift weights with the same muscle group two days in a row. They need this time to repair themselves. As your body becomes used to an activity, this type of pain will not occur until your intensity builds and your muscles have to re-adapt yet again. Generally stretching, ice, massage and NSAID's will relieve the pain. Unfortunately this is the soreness that tends to drive away many new exercisers after they begin a program at a level that was perhaps a little to high. Just another reason to START SLOW when you begin an exercise program.

Angie O'Connor
Clinical Exercise Specialist

Avera
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Podiatry

Q I am diabetic. What is Charcot Foot?

A Charcot is a sudden softening of the bones in the foot that can occur in people who have significant nerve damage, or neuropathy. The bones are weak enough to fracture, and with continued walking the foot eventually changes shape. As the disorder progresses, the arch collapses and the foot takes on a convex shape, giving it a rocker-bottom appearance, making it very difficult to walk.

Charcot foot is a very serious condition that can lead to severe deformity, disability, ulceration's, and even amputation of the leg. Because of the seriousness of Charcot, it is important that patient's with diabetes or neuropathy take preventative measures and seek immediate care if signs of foot swelling and redness appear.

The symptoms of Charcot foot may appear after a sudden trauma or even after "normal activity." Many people do not remember hurting their foot in any way. The first thing they notice is a red and swollen foot. Immediately they think they have infection. Most people who get Charcot, do not have any feeling in their feet. Therefore, the Charcot process is usually painless. Infection and Charcot usually present in the same way, so one must determine if it is infection, or is it Charcot?

Avera Sacred Heart Hospital
Professional Office Pavilion
409 Summit St., Ste. 2600, Yankton
668-8601

Terence Pedersen, D.P.M.

Avera
Foot and Ankle Clinic

Pharmacy/Nutrition

Q Sunscreens - What I need to know to protect myself from the sun. Skin cancer has an incidence of 8 to 16 peoples for every 100,000 people who live in South Dakota or Nebraska.

A

1. The No. 1 cause of skin damage is sun exposure. Sunscreen should contain no less than an SPF 15 for daily use and no less than an SPF 30 for extended periods of sun exposure. Sunscreen should be worn any time you are outside, regardless of how long you will be out, and it should be reapplied frequently (every two hours or every 40 to 80 minutes if swimming or perspiring, even with water-resistant sunscreen).
2. No sunscreen is truly waterproof.
3. For the best protection, apply sunscreen 30 minutes prior to exposure.
4. Sunscreen SPF ratings on the bottle are only realized when you apply enough product. Experts say that adults should be using 1 ounce of sunscreen for full-body coverage.
5. Some medications can significantly increase an individual's sun sensitivity. Check with your pharmacist or doctor to check if any medications you are taking will increase your sensitivity.
6. Children should wear UVA/UVB sunscreen because their skin is more sensitive than adults'.
7. Sunscreen on top of sunscreen doesn't equal more SPF.
8. Unless otherwise noted on the bottle, sunscreen is good for about three years from the date of purchase.

Take time to protect yourself and your family. It will make everyone more comfortable and another easy option to improve your health. Have a great summer!

Kim Korjic
Pharmacy Director

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