

Of The Outdoors | Gary Howey

Wild About Wild Edibles

BY GARY HOWEY

Hartington, Neb.

I love springtime, weather is warming up, fish are starting to bite and it is the time of the year when thousands of folks and I head out to start looking for those wild edibles mushrooms and asparagus.

My first experience at hunting wild asparagus happened by accident, I was on the road delivering parts throughout northern Nebraska. One of my customers mentioned asparagus hunting and I was all ears as if it is a green vegetable, I like it.

After gathering all of the information I could, I kept my eyes out for the old plants as I drove along the roads and one day, near Stuart, Nebraska, I spotted a clump of them in the ditch. I decided to check it out; I pulled over and was down in the ditch walking along the fence line looking for new shoots.

About that time, a pickup came by and a gruff old rancher asked what the heck I was doing on his land, I thought I was screwed and would soon be meeting the local Sheriff.

I explained I had seen some old asparagus plants along the fence line and was seeing if there was any new shoots. He climbed out of his pickup, came down the ditch, walked up to me, nose to nose, asking where I was from and my name. I did my best to be polite, giving him the information he requested.

He spit out a big wad of chew, put his hands on his hip, and that was when I thought I might be in for a sever tongue-lashing or a knock down drag out battle.

"Son, he said if you want asparagus or anything else wild, you don't want to look for it along the highway as every Tom, Dick and Harry had already been there." I politely asked where he would suggest I look. He said, "well if I were you I'd look on the off roads, those less traveled. I thanked him and headed for the truck when he said, "If I was going to look for asparagus, I'd go down to the next mile, head south three miles and the trees in the northwest corner of that section generally has a lot of wild stuff growing there."

"Really, then, I asked if he knew who owned it, his reply "I do, you don't think I'd send you to trespass on someone else's land do you."

I thanked him and hit the road, heading for my new hot spot, when I got there, the land was heavily posted and I wondered to myself if I had been set up.

I climbed over the fence and not only found asparagus; I also found a nice mess of Morels.

You probably are not going to be as lucky as I was, so here is some information on when and where to find wild asparagus.

Wild asparagus appears about the same time as mushrooms, but I have had my best luck finding the more mature spears after mushroom picking is over when temperatures warm up.

It will appear later than asparagus found in your neighbor's garden, as gardens are clean, generally in darker soil, where the ground warms up more quickly.

The ground wild asparagus grows in, may be covered with last year's grasses and plants, so the soil it grows in



Wild Asparagus grows along fence lines, below power lines, on railroad right of ways and in shelterbelts along the less traveled roads.

PHOTO: GARY HOWEY

will not warm up as quickly and appears later.

Look for last year's plants that have gone to seed, it looks like a golden color clump or bush, resembling dried up tumbleweed, the new growth will be growing in amongst last year's plant.

Once you have found your first asparagus, scout the area carefully for new growth as the seeds of the older plants dropped or blown a short distance from the original plant.

The best places to look for wild asparagus is along fence lines, power lines, old railroad right of ways and anywhere birds might land or congregate.

If the fall when asparagus goes to seed, the birds will pick the seeds off the plants, fly off and then pass the hard pit or seed which drops on the ground and if conditions are right, a new asparagus plant will pop up.

Asparagus, like morel mushroom need warm soil and moisture to grow, so sandy areas along fence lines seem to be one of those areas where asparagus comes up first.

If you find asparagus along a fence line, and there is a shelterbelt/tree planting nearby, be sure to check them out closely as the birds will have also set in the trees and may have deposited seeds in these areas.

Because asparagus gets woody, harvest the tender shoots; this does not mean that the larger taller stems will not be edible, but they are the ones that should be left to go to seed for future crops.

When I am hunting asparagus, I like to bring along a sharp knife to cut off the tender shoot. The new tender shoots can be cut at ground

level, for those that are taller and have not gone to seed yet, I start at the top of the plant and go down until it is no longer tender, where it starts to get woody and clip it off. Cleaning asparagus is easy, simply cut off the dried up end, rinse and prepare.

In my house, there is not a whole lot of competition when it comes to preparing and eating fresh asparagus. To prepare it, we simply boil it until tender; top it with some butter substitute, a little Mrs. Dash or other seasoning and then pig out.

Hunting morels and asparagus is an excellent way to get outside and to enjoy the outdoors and the bounties Mother Nature provides.

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 in the Yankton area on local channels 2 & 98 Saturday at 6:30 pm and Sunday@ 7:00, on the MIDCO Sports Network Thursday at 5:30 pm and Sunday at 10:00 am. He and Simon Fuller Co-Host the *Outdoor Adventures* radio program on *Classic Hits 106.3, ESPN Sports Radio 1570 in Southeastern South Dakota and Northeast Nebraska*. In Northwest Iowa, it airs on KCHE 92.1 FM. If you are looking for more outdoor information, check out www.outdoorsmenadventures.com.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Three members (Chase Uecker, Layne Uecker, Shelbi Lindner) of the Yankton County 4-H Shooting Sports Club were among 1600 youth participated in the State 4-H Shoot on April 24-26, utilizing 10 different ranges in the Pierre and Ft. Pierre area. Shooters were broken down into age groups and by equipment. Lindner scored a 149.12 (out of 150) in the "Open Compound" division earning second place and a 138.11 in the "Compound with sight and release" division earning purple ribbons in both divisions. Layne Uecker scored a 100.02 in "Compound without sights or release" division and a 123.04 in "Compound with sight and release" earning blue ribbons in both divisions. The South Dakota State 4-H Shoot is one of the largest youth shooting events in the nation. Teams are selected or confirmed for multiple national events during State. For more information on 4-H Shooting Sports, contact the Yankton County extension office at (605) 665-0299.

GFP Releases Lake Trout In Deerfield


PIERRE – A popular cold water predator, lake trout, is expanding its territory to Deerfield Reservoir in the Black Hills of South Dakota. Earlier this month, the South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks (GFP) released 55 large lake trout into Deerfield Reservoir. The large trout, which average 27 inches in length, were acquired from the Saratoga National Fish Hatchery in Wyoming.

"An important part of why these fish are going into Deerfield Reservoir stems from the communication with anglers during recent GFP open house events and comments provided while crafting the state's Black Hills fisheries management plans in recent months. We plan to continue these efforts with future stockings of 11 inch lake trout raised in our hatcheries," stated John Lott, GFP chief of fisheries. "Review of lake trout introductions into other waters with similar habitat to Deerfield Reservoir as well as the physical characteristics of the reservoir and fish survey data were part of the decision to stock these fish."

While it was decided to stock the trout in Deerfield Reservoir, it is difficult to predict how they will perform.

"Deerfield Reservoir has an abundance of rock bass and yellow perch for the trout to eat. It is unlikely the predatory trout will affect the abundance of rock bass or yellow perch in the reservoir, though they may help improve the average sizes of these fish available to anglers. Compared to typical lake trout waters, Deerfield Reservoir is small and shallow and may lack a large area of ideal lake trout habitat in the summer, but we think these fish will do well," stated Lott.

As with any introductory stocking, the response of the fish community and the performance of the newly-stocked lake trout will be monitored through annual surveys. The one trout per day, 14 inches or longer regulation, currently in effect for all of the Black Hills, will limit anglers to (at most) one lake trout per day from Deerfield Reservoir, given the large size of the fish being stocked. Due to the limited nature of these resources, future evaluation of length restrictions similar to those currently in place on the lake trout population in Pactola Lake will take place. While it is currently legal to harvest these fish in accordance with existing regulations, it is hoped anglers will release them if they are in good condition, to help kick-start a lake trout fishery.



YANKTON AREA RELAY FOR LIFE

JUNE 26-27, 2015 • RIVERSIDE PARK
SURVIVOR'S LAP • 6:00PM

4:30 - 5:30PM Survivor Registration • 5:00 - 5:30PM Survivor Celebration/Meal • 5:45PM Group Survivors Pictures

SURVIVOR REGISTRATION

Name _____ Gender M/F

Phone _____ Email Address _____


Date of Birth (optional) _____ Month and Year of Diagnosis _____

Type of Cancer _____ T-Shirt Size (circle): YM, YL, S, M, L, XL, 2XL, 3XL, 4XL

Signature _____

☐ I am interested in hearing more about patient-related programs/services of the American Cancer Society. Yes/No

☐ Please contact me about volunteer opportunities with the American Cancer Society. Yes/No

☐ Please send me information about donating to the American Cancer Society. Yes/No [Like Us On...](#) 

Please send registration form by Friday, June 12th to:

Avera Cancer Institute Yankton - Attn. Darla Gullikson, 1115 W 9th St., Yankton, SD 57078

Survivor Registration form can also be completed on the Yankton Relay For Life website at www.relayforlife.org/yanktonSD (click on Survivors & Caregivers) by June 12th to ensure t-shirt size.

Business Opportunity At Roy Lake Resort

PIERRE -- Entrepreneurs interested in operating Roy Lake Resort located within Roy Lake State Park in northeastern South Dakota can now begin submitting their proposals.

"Roy Lake Resort has established itself as one of the most popular destinations in the Glacial Lakes region for families and outdoor enthusiasts," said Doug Hofer, state park director. "Roy Lake provides excellent year round outdoor recreation opportunities from camping, fishing and boating in the summer to ice fishing, waterfowl hunting and snowmobiling in the winter."

The prospectus for the operation of Roy Lake Resort is now available online and through the Department of Game, Fish and Parks. The prospectus details the terms and conditions under which interested operators may submit a proposal for consideration. It also includes a detailed business opportunity, the requirements necessary to submit a proposal and a draft concession agreement for a term of ten years. Required services include cabin and lodge room rental, retail goods, courtesy docks and boat fuel.

Proposals must be received by Aug. 15, 2015.

Roy Lake State Park is located approximately 10 miles southeast of Lake City or roughly 25 miles north of Webster of Highway 10.

TAKING APPLICATIONS!
ALL SHIFTS!
PRODUCTION POSITIONS!



We offer a competitive benefits package.
For inquiries, call Mary Mulder at 605-764-4000 or email resume to mmulder@amesbury.com

515 Noid Rd., Canton, SD 57013

EOE

Be first
in line for
kindergarten &
sports physicals.



Be first in line to book your child's sports and kindergarten physical and enjoy your summer with peace of mind. Schedule now to work around family vacations, reunions, and work schedules.

Sports physical forms need to be completed by a parent or guardian prior to the appointment.

Call NOW to book your appointment.
605-665-7841

1104 West 8th Street • Yankton, SD 57078
www.YanktonMedicalClinic.com

