

OUTDOORS DIGEST

Of The Outdoors | Gary Howey

Sight-In Day Oct. 13

The Yankton Sharpshooters will be holding its annual Sight-In Day on Sunday, Oct. 13, at the range located 5 miles west of Walmart and 2 1/2 miles north of Highway 50. Hours will be 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Targets and rests will be provided. All guns must be unloaded before entering range. You are asked to see one of the range officers before removing guns from vehicles.

GFP Commission To Meet In Spearfish

PIERRE — The South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks Commission will meet Oct. 3 - 4 at the Holiday Inn in Spearfish.

The meeting, which is open to the public, will run from 1 - 5 p.m. MDT on Thursday and from 8 a.m. - noon on Friday.

Discussion topics include rules finalization for the 2014 mountain lion hunting season and a report from the Wildlife Management Institute on the GFP big game management program.

The public will have the opportunity to provide oral testimony on the mountain lion rules finalization at 2 p.m. on Thursday.

The complete agenda for the GFP Commission meeting is available at <http://www.gfp.sd.gov/agency/commission/archives/2013/october/agenda.pdf>.

The Spearfish Holiday Inn is located just east of Spearfish off Interstate 90 at 305 N. 27th St.

Hunters Reminded About Prohibitions Against Use Of Salt And Bait Stations

PIERRE — As South Dakota big game hunters prepare for the opening of hunting seasons, the Game, Fish and Parks Department is taking the opportunity to remind them that the use of salt or salt licks for the purpose of enticing or baiting big game animals is prohibited by state law.

"Most hunters realize that you cannot hunt over salt, but conservation officers often receive questions regarding the use of salt for scouting," Andy Alban, GFP law enforcement program administrator said. "It is also illegal to place salt in an area utilized in conjunction with a camera for the purpose of pre-season scouting and then hunt that same area once the season begins."

Additionally, no one may establish, utilize or maintain a bait station from Aug. 15 to Feb. 1, inclusive, to attract any big game animal, including wild turkey. A bait station is a location where grains, fruits, vegetables, nuts, hay, minerals or any other natural food materials, commercial products containing natural food materials or by-products of such materials are placed or maintained as an attractant to big game animals for the purpose of hunting. The use of scents alone does not constitute a bait station.

"If you place any of these materials in a location from Aug. 15 to Feb. 1 you may not hunt that area for big game within the same period," Alban said. "It is important to note that the regulation does not apply to foods that have not been placed or gathered by a person and result from normal environmental conditions or accepted farming, forest management, wildlife food plantings, orchard management or similar land management activities."

Alban noted that studies have shown baiting is not necessary to successfully harvest big game and it is not possible to bait or feed big game without increasing the likelihood for the spread of diseases and parasites.

BY GARY HOWEY
Hartington, Neb.

The gurgling, metallic, clacking sound coming from my surface lure working its way over the submerged rock reefs and points was mesmerizing.

With my lure quickly approaching the boat, I was beginning to think it was true when it is said, "the Muskie's is a fish of ten thousand casts."

When they say this, they aren't talking about ten thousand casts to catch one of these majestic fish, they're talking about ten thousand casts just to have one follow your bait.

As my bait came to the boat, I detected a subtle movement; something was slowly moving up from the depths, something big, a dark massive shadow, that quickly transformed into a huge Muskie that was lurking directly below my bait.

This was it, finally, I was about to achieve something, which had been on my bucket list for years, to have an opportunity to entice and perhaps hook a Muskie, the fish of ten thousand casts.

I frantically started working my bait, doing a figure eight alongside the boat, which caught the attention of the fish, who rose up towards my bait, and then it happened. Team Member Larry Myhre, who was fishing next to me, unaware of the fish making a move on my bait, brought his lure to the boat, spooking the monster fish I'd hope to land, "Rats."

Our guide Bob Benson, one of Lake Vermilion's premier Muskie guides who had landed over 100 Muskie this year, estimated that fish to be 40 plus pounds.

Muskies are notorious for following a bait to the boat and then losing interest, this is why, when fishing for Muskies, it's important as your bait reaches the boat that you work your bait in a figure eight, trying to entice a fish that may be following your lure, to attack.

You can about imagine what a fight you would have on your hands when a 40-pound fish jumped on your lure right next to the boat, when you only have a foot or so of line out.

This is why, when fishing for Muskies, you need super, heavy-duty equipment and why Muskie guides like Bob Benson uses an 80-pound braided line with a 150 pound fluorocarbon leader spooled on a large capacity bait-caster matched to a heavy rod, the big tackle needed to land these huge fish.

Well, I missed the first one, there was still a lot of daylight left, so no sense on crying over a missed fish, I reared back, sending the one pound lure back out past the marker buoy and started cranking the bait back once again.



Gary HOWEY



Lake Vermilion guide Bob Benson is pictured with one of the many Muskies he's landed this year.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

We were fishing out of Pehrson Lodge and Resort, one of the premier destinations on Lake Vermilion, overlooking some of the most picturesque areas I've been fortunate enough to fish.

National Geographic Magazine once declared Lake Vermilion to be one of the top ten most scenic lakes in the United States. The lake is located on the south edge of the Canadian Shield, in the north-eastern corner of Minnesota, north of Cook, on the south edge of the Superior Boundary Waters.

With over 40,000 acres of water, 365 islands and 1200 miles of shoreline, there is a lot to see and do on Lake Vermilion.

One thing you'll see is on Lake Vermilion is the American flag being proudly displayed by those who live along the lake, as it can be seen on the islands, on the docks, cabins and along the shoreline as these folks who live way up north are proud Americans.

The lake, known for its great fishing for walleye, smallmouth bass, panfish, northern and of course Muskie as the lake is one of the top Muskie lakes in Minnesota.

Muskies are huge fish with the Minnesota state record tipping the scale at 54 pounds, while the world record Muskie weighed in at 58 pounds.

Bob, who was on the front deck of the boat was pitching a big spinnerbait, while Larry and I shared the back deck, after having one fish spook, were doing our best to keep some space between our baits.

Shortly thereafter, Bob and Larry both had big fish follow their baits, but again, as before, they lost interest, back-

ing off their baits.

Bob believes in a two-pronged attack when it comes to Muskie fishing, hitting the water early, fishing for three to four hours, taking a break, then hitting it again around four until dark.

He didn't need to convince Larry and I this was a good plan as Muskie fishing can be grueling as we were casting, throwing heavy weight baits.

After a short break and a quick lunch, we were back on the water, ready for the second go around.

As Bob's boat raced across the water, his locator, marking the way, we headed for another location where he had taken big Muskie on previous trips.

Many of these locations would be, like those we'd fished that morning, rock reefs marked by buoys, while others would be rock lined shorelines.

As Bob motored into position, I rearing back, propelling my bait out, laying it down just short of the rock-strewn shoreline while Larry worked the area out front, with Bob pounding the water behind us.

As I glanced back towards Bob, it was obvious he had a follow and as his bait came close to the boat, within a foot of it, another big fish was making a move.

It was eyeballing his bait, just inches behind the big bait, quickly, he worked his bait in a figure eight pattern and then in a wide arc, hoping to entice the big fish to strike.

Once again, the fish lost interest, sinking back into the depths, seeming to have played this game before, which she probably had, as catch and release is important part of this type of fishing, espe-

cially when it comes to a trophy fish such as the Muskie.

Many of these fish had been caught and then released and perhaps seeing most baits, weren't ready to be fooled again.

Shortly thereafter, Larry connected with a fish, which would be a short battle as the fish dove into the rock reef pulling free.

On this trip, it just wasn't meant to be, but as a beautiful sunset appeared over the lake, we were able to say, we'd fished on one of Minnesota's most beautiful lakes, Lake Vermilion. Fishing for one of America's most prized trophies, the Muskie, having had one fish on and five follows, not a bad day and you can bet, we've got the bug and we'll be back again to pursue the fish of ten thousand casts.

If you would like more information on Pehrson Lodge Resort and Lake Vermilion, check out their web site at www.pehrsonlodge.com.

You can contact Bob at Bob Benson Guide Service at (715-642-2607).

Gary Howey, Hartington, Neb., is a former tournament angler, fishing and hunting guide. Howey is the Producer/Host of the award winning *Outdoorsmen Adventures television series*, which airs throughout the upper Midwest on Fox affiliates, can be seen in Yankton on Channels 2 & 98 Saturday at 6:30 pm and Sunday at 7:00 am. He and Simon Fuller are the hosts of the *Outdoor Adventures radio program Monday-Saturday at 6:45 am on Classic Hits 106.3 and ESPN Sports Radio 1570*. If you're looking for more outdoor information, check out www.outdoorsmenadventures.com.

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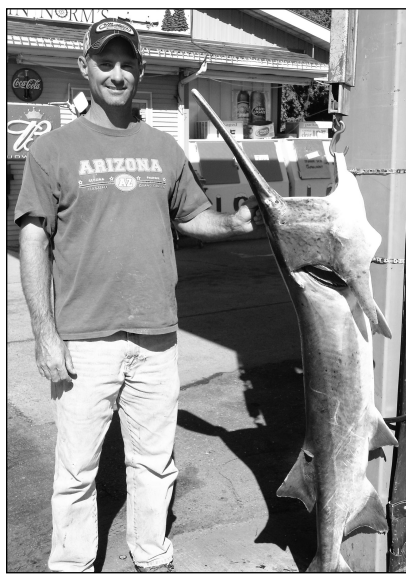


PHOTO: CAPTAIN NORM'S
ABOVE LEFT: Pat Long caught this 51.5 pound paddlefish on opening day below Gavin's Point Dam.

ABOVE CENTER: Curt Morin caught this 50-pound paddlefish on opening day below Gavin's Point Dam.

ABOVE RIGHT: Bob Bittner caught this 76-pound paddlefish on opening day below Gavin's Point Dam.



SUBMITTED PHOTO
Roger Bader caught this 46.5-inch paddlefish below Gavin's Point Dam on Oct. 2.

Coyotes

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"We have to shore up the run game, but we need to protect the quarterback better," he said. "It's hard to run the ball when you can't throw it either. If you have nine guys in the box, it's going to be tough going on the ground."

The Coyotes appear to have found a solution at long snapper, an area that struggled last week — a bad snap went over the punter's head and resulted in a Western Illinois touchdown last week.

USD moved redshirt freshman Schad Wilson to long

snapper this week.

"He's been doing a good job, so we think we found the guy we want," Glenn said. "Fingers crossed."

Such changes to the depth chart — whether it be at quarterback, offensive line or long snapper — could spark a turnaround for the Coyotes, O'Neill said.

"One thing we've talked about is that this could be the turning point in our season," he said. "Get a win, and who knows what happens the rest of the season."

You can follow Jeremy Hoeck on Twitter at twitter.com/jhoeck. Discuss this story at www.yankton.net.

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