

OF THE OUTDOORS | GARY HOWEY

'Strange' Dove Season

BY GARY HOWEY
Hartington, Neb.

Well, the 2012 dove season opener is now in the books, and I can say, like the weather this year, it was strange.

Since everything was so dry, many of us hunters had thought because of the dry weather, if we could find a pond with water in it, we'd have non-stop shooting.

Because of the strange weather, the birds had bunched up early and were in larger flocks than normal.

Not so in the part of northeast Nebraska Anthony Thoeny and I hunted in.

Gary
HOWEY

We were set up around a small pond, which had a dead tree near by, ideal for the Doves to set in before coming in for water. Our decoys were out including a mechanical Dove decoy. Anthony, I along with my black MoJo would be situated in the shade of several large round bales within easy shooting distance of the water.

Upon arrival just before five, several Doves flew from the brush pile and water hole, giving us the confidence we indicating this would be another of those great hunts like we had last year.

Since we were at the "only" watering hole within miles located a short distance from the grove the doves used as a roost, all we needed to do was wait for the late afternoon flights.

As the afternoon passed, a few doves flew by, most well out of range, then it happened, two doves started winging their way in our direction and all we needed to do was wait for them. As they approached the road, they decided to set on the power lines and look the situation over and over and over.

It was 95 degrees, these doves had to be thirsty, I know we were, especially MoJo, my black Lab. Before those two Doves made their move, another came winging in from the northeast, as he came within range, both I and Anthony drew a bead on it. I was using my 12 gauge over under, one I'd used very seldom but needed to get



FOR A successful dove hunt you'll need a weapon you're comfortable with, a lot of shells, a comfortable seat, a good dog, a lot of water to keep you and your dog hydrated, a pond with water and hopefully a few doves.

used to with Anthony using his 20 gauge.

I would have the first shot, but when I reached for my safety, which had always been on the side of the gun, I found it had "moved" and before I figured out that it was now on the top of the shotgun, I told Anthony to take it. Which he did with his second shot, making his shooting way above the 7 to 8 shot per bird average.

As the report of his shot rang out across the road, a whole army of doves, ones that had been trying to get out of the heat of the sun took wing and heading our way.

This is where we did our best to bring our shooting average down as we desperately tried to catch up with the doves doing the duck and weave as they came through.

Anthony was doing his best with his 20 gauge as was I with my over under, but with only five shots between us and forty doves out in front of us, we were doing more flock shooting that zeroing in

on one bird. It was more of a bang, bang, bang and bang and then reloading, taking more time to reload than shooting before the birds disappeared.

As the smoke cleared, there were a dove or two on the ground, along with a pretty embarrassing pile of empty casing on the ground.

Throughout the afternoon, a few doves glided in, but nothing like we'd anticipated as generally just before sundown every Dove in the area would be on their way to water.

Perhaps part of the problem was that on the ponds that did hold water, there were no other hunters to keep the birds moving, as this was the afternoon opener in Nebraska of the Husker football game against Southern Mississippi.

The key to having a great early season is to have as many ponds or watering holes covered by other hunters as once Doves have been fired at, they'll have a tendency to move from one pond to another with water.

If other hunters are positioned

around these watering holes, the birds will jump back and forth trying to get to water and when you're located on one of the few ponds with water, you'd think that the birds would be forced to come in.

We did have some birds come within range and ended up with 15 birds, giving us about a 50% success, which as I mentioned previously, is above average.

Last season, our best hunting was after the local doves moved out, when the migrating flocks came in from the north when we hunted a larger pond situated just across the road from where we were hunting on this trip.

The differences between this hunt and last year, was the trees were on the south side of the pond, so any birds going to water or roost would have to fly over the pond. The power lines where the birds like to set were beyond the trees and on that pond; we were concealed below the berm of the pond.

Since we were hunting on the opposite side of the road, the power lines were just above the pond allowing the birds to set, with plenty of time to look things over. The limiting factor seemed to be that the pond we were on was much smaller, closer to the road and with a lot of traffic.

There's still time this season for dove hunting, but in order for it to be a successful one, we're going to need rain to put water into some of the other ponds as well as hunters on set up on these ponds.

Like anything in the outdoors, Mother Nature is in charge and without her help, no matter what we're hunting, will have to adapt to the changing conditions and we the hunters must also change with them.

Not all hunts are successful, but filling your limit isn't what hunting is all about as the experience and the time spent in the field and with friends are a huge part of the hunt and there's other hunts coming up and there's always next year.

Gary Howey, Hartington, Neb., is a former guide and tournament fishing that has been an outdoor communicator for over 28 years. His outdoor television series Outdoorsmen Adventures can be seen locally during the 1st and 4th quarter throughout the upper Midwest. For more information, go to www.outdoorsmenadventures.com.

TROPHY SPOTLIGHT



Nicholas Frazier snagged this 6-pound Walleye below Gavin's Point Dam.

PHOTOS: CAPTAIN NORM'S
TOP LEFT: Timmy Riggins caught this White Bass below Gavin's Point Dam.
TOP RIGHT: Connie Lovejoy caught this 5.8-pound Walleye below Gavin's Point Dam.

Report: S.D. Has Highest Pct. Of Hunting Residents

WASHINGTON — Participation in wildlife recreation increased in 28 states since 2006, according to the findings of the 2011 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation State Overview Report released by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service this week.

The survey, conducted since 1955, measures participation in these activities and related spending on trips and equipment across the nation, as well as in individual states. Survey data shows that hunters, anglers and wildlife watchers spent \$145 billion last year on related gear, trips and other purchases.

Among the highlights:

- South Dakota had the highest

proportion of state residents who hunted: 21 percent.

- Of the 28 states with increases in the number of wildlife-related recreation participants from 2006-2011, the largest percentage increases were seen in Alaska (47 percent) and Louisiana (40 percent).

- Alaska had the highest proportion of state residents who fished: 40 percent.

- Vermont had the highest proportion of state residents who wildlife watched: 53 percent.

Overall, the survey found that 38 percent of all Americans 16 years and older participated in wildlife-related recreation in 2011, an increase of 2.6 million from the previous report in 2006.

Huskers

From Page 9

"We didn't respond very well to Oregon, so hopefully we learned some lessons and we won't be as big-eyed and we will be able to settle down and play football a little quicker than we did two weeks ago," Malzahn said.

This will be Aplin's second visit to Memorial Stadium. He played three snaps as a freshman on the 2009 team that lost 38-9 to the Huskers. The Red Wolves will receive a \$1 million guarantee for Saturday's game — the most Nebraska has ever paid an opponent for coming to Lincoln.

Aplin said the Red Wolves can't afford to play from behind if they hope to pull the upset.

"The big thing is we can't go three-and-out," he said. "We have to give our defense a break. The biggest thing is starting early. We can't wait until the second half to finally get rolling, because then it will be too late, especially against a team like Nebraska."

Nebraska, a 24-point favorite, is in no position to go through the motions against the Red Wolves, tight end Kyler Reed said.

"You might be the favorite, but you never want to fall asleep against teams like this," Reed said. "Coach Bo and the coaches are going to have us ready and have us alert. We don't want to overlook anybody. We've done that in the past. We can't do that again."

Jackrabbit

From Page 9

Stiegelmeier said. "His effort is phenomenal. Some guys don't do the things he does. He is always reaching for an extra inch in his run."

An area of concern, however, could be how much Zenner has run. He carried the ball 23 times at Kansas and 34 times at South-eastern Louisiana.

"I don't think we want to run him 30-some times a game," Stiegelmeier said. "It's not about 278 yards rushing, it's about winning football games and staying healthy. We need to get our backup (redshirt freshman Reginald Gandy) in there."

Volleyball: USD Opens Summit League Play With Win

MACOMB, Ill. — The South Dakota volleyball team was in sync on Friday night to start the Summit League season with a four set win over Western Illinois (21-25, 25-19, 25-23, 25-21).

Kim Bulaga led a group of three Coyotes with double digit digs, while Kendall Krittenbrink and Amber Aschoff led South Dakota (7-5, 1-0) offensively with 18 kills and 12 kills respectively.

"It was a real quality team effort," USD head coach Matt Houk. "We did a lot of little things well. Even in set one when we lost we battled back to grab momentum for game two."

Outside of Bulaga's defensive work, Tori Kroll recorded 13 digs and Riley Haug added 10 digs to the defensive effort. Kroll also continued to set players up on the offensive end with 42 assists.

Krittenbrink recorded double digit kills for the eighth time in nine games she's played in this year. She's averaged 16.2 kills over the last five matches. Aschoff has reached double digit kills in 10 of South Dakota 12 matches.

Natalie Walseth contributed both offensively and defensively with nine kills and five block assists.

The Coyotes led a couple of times in the first set with their biggest lead at five early on at 8-3.

Western Illinois (6-5) came back by scoring nine of the next 11 points to lead 12-10. The two sides tied five times before the Leathernecks went on a four-point run to open a 21-17 lead. The two sides traded points from then on to give Western Illinois the first set.

Set two was all South Dakota as the Coyotes never trailed and tied only at 4-4. Krittenbrink had six kills, two blocks and an ace in the set, while Walseth had three kills and a pair of blocks assists. After Western Illinois pulled with one at 11-10, the Coyotes used a 12-6 run to break away with the set.

Western Illinois couldn't hang on to leads in the final two sets. WIU led a majority of set three, but couldn't build on a 17-12 lead. South Dakota turned the tables on an 11-2 run to take a 23-19 lead, and although the Leathernecks fought back to tie at 23, the Coyotes scored the final two points to take a 2-1 set lead.

Again the Leathernecks lead for most of set four, but the Coyotes fought back from four points down to tie the set at 15. South Dakota then used four kills and four Western Illinois errors to spark a 10-6 run to end the match.

South Dakota will be back in action on Saturday night when

they travel to IUPUI for a match at 7 p.m.

Thursday High School

Baltic Triangular

BALTIC — Allie Walter combined for 19 kills and 17 ace serves as the Baltic Bulldogs won both of their matches at a home volleyball triangular with Gayville-Volin and Freeman Academy on Thursday.

Gayville split its two matches, defeating Freeman Academy in the opener.

GAYVILLE-VOLIN DEF. FREEMAN ACADEMY 26-28, 26-24, 25-9, 25-9: Kelia Barta recorded 17 kills, seven digs and seven ace serves in the win for the Raiderettes, while Rachel Haas added 13 kills and six digs. Nikki Guy posted six kills and 13 digs.


For the Bobcats, Caroline Sching and Hannah Yoder each had eight digs, while Bethany Wollmann recorded four blocks and 13 digs. Brooklyn Ries posted eight set assists.

BALTIC DEF. FREEMAN ACADEMY 25-17, 25-18, 25-8: Walter posted nine kills and 12 ace serves for Baltic, while Abby Weinzell had seven set assists and Morgan Forsch added four kills.

For the Bobcats, Yoder posted four kills and four digs, Sching had three kills and 10 digs, and Clara Koerner had six assists.

BALTIC DEF. GAYVILLE-VOLIN 25-13, 25-16, 25-17: Walter had 10 kills, four blocks and five aces in the win for the Bulldogs, while Weinzell had eight set assists and Forsch pounded down five kills.

In the loss for GV, Barta posted nine kills and five digs, Guy added 10 digs and Haas had eight digs. Adisson Bertrand recorded 14 set assists.



Cooking Class

with Chef Staci

Mediterranean Diet Recipes


Thursday, Sept. 20 • 6:00pm

Sunday, Sept 23 • 1:30pm

\$20.00 Fee (must pre-register)

RECIPES • TASTING

Pre-register by calling Chef Staci at the Store 665-3412 or e-mail 1899chef@hy-vee.com



2100 Broadway

Yankton • 665-3412



PLAN FIRST. PLANT LATER.

We do our part. You do yours.

Before you plant, get the facts.

- Call 811 for underground service line locations. Plant at least 25 feet from lines.
- Avoid planting where trees can grow into overhead power lines, which can cause service outages or dangerous situations.
- Visit www.northwesternenergy.com/trees for more tips.



Delivering a Bright Future