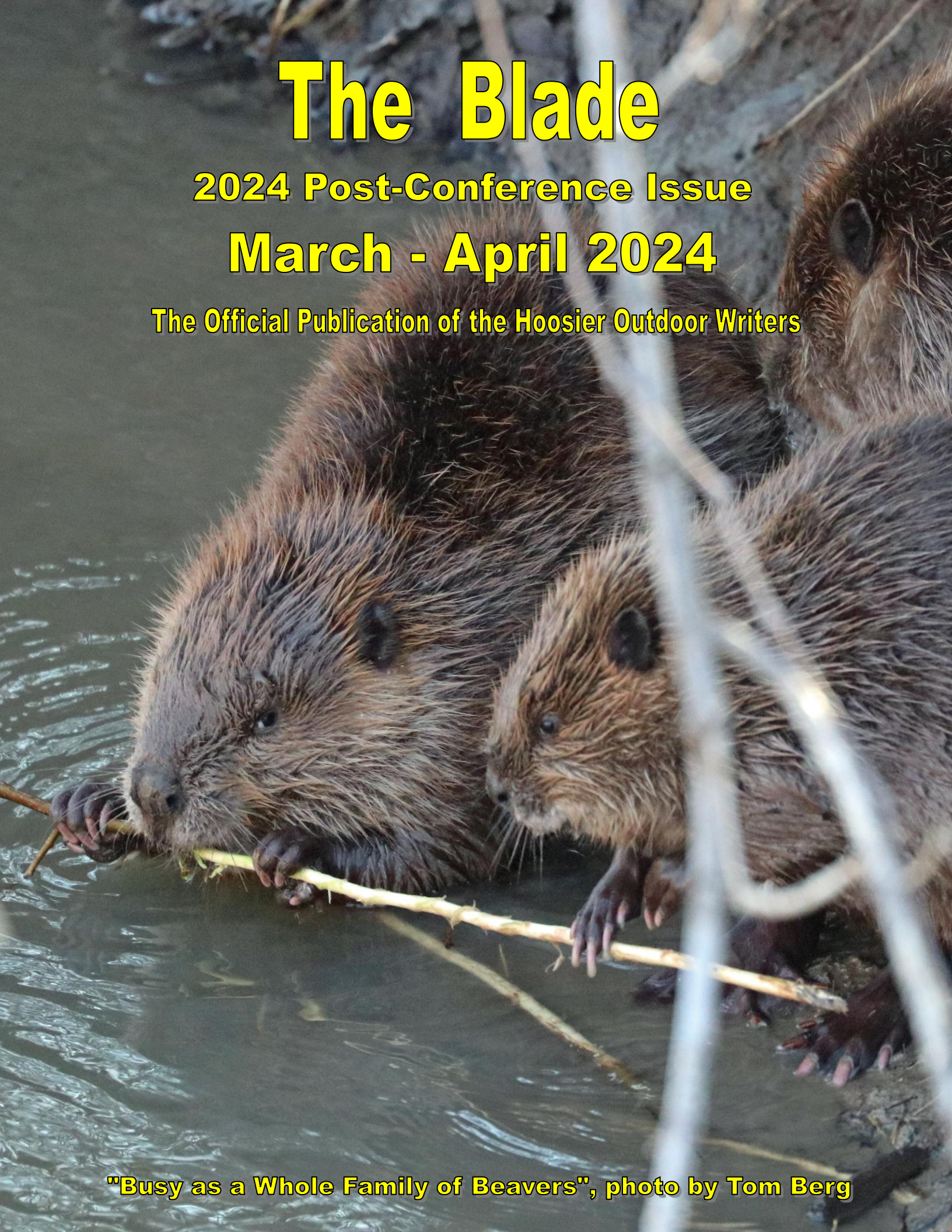


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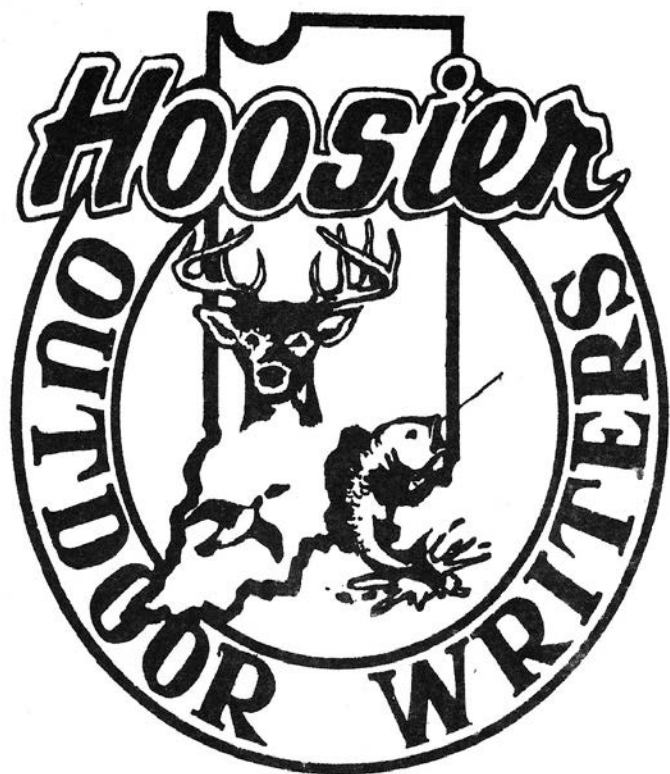
2024 Post-Conference Issue

March - April 2024

The Official Publication of the Hoosier Outdoor Writers



"Busy as a Whole Family of Beavers", photo by Tom Berg



Hoosier Outdoor Writers

The Hoosier Outdoor Writers was formed in 1969 and has brought together many diverse groups and individuals with shared interests. The Hoosier Outdoor Writers, known among its members as HOW, is a group of dedicated media professionals who are keenly interested in the wise use of natural resources in the Hoosier State.

Hoosier Outdoor Writers Executive Council

Board Chairman

Jarrett Manek
7234 Old Forest Rd SW
Corydon, IN 47112
jmanek@dnr.IN.gov

President

Bob Sawtelle
2350 Harrison Spring Rd NW
Corydon, IN 47112
blueriverbob1@gmail.com

Vice President

Marilyn Culler
204 S. Spring St
Greencastle, IN 46135
culler.photo@gmail.com

Executive Director

Tom Berg
2142 Nondorf St
Dyer, IN 46311
director@hoosieroutdoorwriters.org

Advisor

Bill Keaton
7070 Vilas Rd
Spencer, IN 47460
wbkeaton1945@gmail.com

Newsletter Editor

Tom Berg
2142 Nondorf St
Dyer, IN 46311
director@hoosieroutdoorwriters.org

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On the cover: A family of beavers just spending some quiet time together on the bank of a small creek in northwest Indiana. Mother is busy stripping the bark off of a tasty branch, while junior looks on and hopes for a bite. Father beaver is behind them, with only one ear visible. Photo by Tom Berg.

President's Message

by Ranger Bob Sawtelle

Gobble, Gobble, Gobble 2024

For nearly 30 years, a group of hunters have held a turkey camp on the banks of the Blue River in southern Indiana. It quickly became known as the Blue River Turkey Camp.

It started simply enough. Two of us were having a business dinner when Frankie Philips from Memphis asked if I duck hunted. My response was "sure do". I was invited down to hunt flooded rice fields and timber with him. In turn, I asked Frankie if he had turkey hunted. "No, but I would like to". So began the annual fall and spring migrations of myself and friends to Tunica, Mississippi and Frankie and friends to southern Indiana.

This launched our concept of trip trading. Each host provides shelter, meals, and an opportunity to hunt, fish or both. Guests provide their own licenses. Our group has grown from an original four to many more, hailing from the states of TN, AR, MS, MO, IN, KY, WI, IA, PA, MN and VA. Each year we have chances to trade hunting and fishing trips across North America and Canada.



Above (L to R): Ranger Bob, Abby Manek and Frankie Philips pose after Abby received the prized hat.

This spring at The Blue River Turkey Camp we had southern guests from TN, MO, VA, and northern visitors from MN. Local IN hunters filled in the gaps.

Tradition: Years ago, I donated my flat-brimmed park ranger hat to become the prize for the best tom turkey harvested. The winner got to take the hat home until the next season and was required to add a "decoration" to the hat before returning it the following year. Each hunter recorded their harvest with their signature and date on the brim of the hat.

In this year of 2024, our preceding HOW President, Jarrett Manek's high school daughter Abby claimed the honor. She harvested the first bird of the group on opening day and the heaviest at 28 pounds. Her tom was huge. She took the hat home last year with the best bird of 2023, too. This lady can hunt!

In the early years of Turkey Camp we survived on hotdogs and hamburgers; maybe brats if we were feeling proud. Then the southern gentlemen showed up with sweet potatoes and honey baked ham. Indiana countered with our version of grilled chicken. Our meals have evolved into fully complimented dinners with homemade fixings and more. Soups, salads, sautéed broccoli, twice baked potatoes, corn on the cob all contribute to the nightly menu. My wife, Missi, works hard all week creating and providing the sides for each meal. Thursday, we had fried crappie and walleye provided by the MN boys and Jarrett. Our last Turkey Camp meal on Friday night was provided by our camp southern grill master Frankie. Grilled beef tenderloin filled our plates and bellies. Nobody goes home hungry.

In addition to turkey hunting and eating, we also offer prime smallmouth and rock bass fishing. This year Kade Carter and John Maxwell enjoyed a perfect float down the Blue River. Our hunting and fishing groups are not just old men – over half of this year's participants were young men and women. Our Blue River Turkey Camp has a healthy future!

The Hoosier Outdoor Writers

New Members, Past Presidents and Memorial Section

HOW Extends a Warm Welcome to our Growing Ranks of Outdoor Communicators:

Brenden Terrill (Associate)
Indianapolis, IN
Sponsor: Don Cranfill

John Schoonveld (Associate)
Rockville, IN
Sponsor: Tom Berg

Memorial to Deceased HOW Members Those Who Have Gone Before Us:

Jack Alkire – HOW President 1979
Bill Beeman – Executive Director Emeritus
Don Bickel
Ed Blann
Charlie Brown
Gary Carden
Jim “Moose” Carden – HOW President 1982-83
George Carey
John Case
Bill Church – HOW President 1972
Gene Clifford
Jack “Big Jake” Cooper
Mark Cottingham
Larry Crecelius – HOW President 2003
Jerry Criss
Gary “Dox” Doxtater
Dick Forbes
Tom Glancy – HOW President 1977
Dale Griffith
Phil Hawkins
Fred Heckman
Marty Jaranowski – HOW President 1996
Jack Kerins
Mike Lyle – HOW President 1981
Ralph “Cork” McHargue – HOW President 1976
Dick Mercier
Bob Nesbit
Hellen Ochs
Jack Parry
Harry Renfro
“Bayou” Bill Scifres – HOW President – **6 Terms**
George Seketa
Hal Shymkus
Al Spiers
Robert “Doc” Stunkard
Butch Tackett
George Tilford
John Trout, Jr.
Joe West

Past Presidents of HOW

“Bayou” Bill Scifres	1969
“Bayou” Bill Scifres	1970
“Bayou” Bill Scifres	1971
Bill Church	1972
Rick Bramwell	1973
Jack Ennis	1974
Phil Junker	1975
Ralph McHargue	1976
Tom Glancy	1977
Bob Rubin	1978
Jack Alkire	1979
Louie Stout	1980
Mike Lyle	1981
Jim “Moose” Carden	1982
Jim “Moose” Carden	1983
John Davis	1984
John Davis	1985
Ray Harper	1986
Ray Harper	1987
Ray Dickerson	1988
“Bayou” Bill Scifres	1989
“Bayou” Bill Scifres	1990
“Bayou” Bill Scifres	1991
Jack Spaulding	1992
Jack Spaulding	1993
John Rawlings	1994
Phil Bloom	1995
Marty Jaranowski	1996
John Martino	1997
Mike Schoonveld	1998
Jack Spaulding	1999
Jack Spaulding	2000
Sharon Wiggins	2001
Phil Junker	2002
Larry Crecelius	2003
Bryan Poynter	2004
Phil Bloom	2005
Brian Smith	2006
Brian Smith	2007
Brent Wheat	2008
Bryan Poynter	2009
John Maxwell	2010
Brandon Butler	2011
Josh Lantz	2012
Ben Shadley	2013
Bob Sawtelle	2014
Alan Garbers	2015
Ken McBroom	2016
Don Cranfill	2017
Troy McCormick	2018
Mike Schoonveld	2019
Kenny Bayless	2020
Kenny Bayless	2021
Phil Seng	2022
Jarrett Manek	2023

Annual HOW Fun Shoot Featured “Sporting Clays in the Blizzard”

by Tom Berg

The 2024 HOW Fun Shoot held before the conference at the Indiana State Fairgrounds was another memorable event. OK, it wasn't quite a blizzard, but it was a heck of a snowstorm! It is a tradition for the shooters in our membership to get together and break a few clay targets, have some fun and renew old friendships on the Friday before the Annual Meeting. Some of our regular participants are experienced shooters while others are new to the sport and are still learning, but all skill levels are always welcome!

This year our friends at **Winchester Ammunition** provided the shotshells to all of the participating shooters free of charge. Winchester is a HOW Supporting Member, so please support them in your work whenever the opportunity presents itself.

2024 Fun Shoot
Sponsor



Above (L to R): HOW shooters Phil Seng, Laura Seng, Mike Schoonveld and Jarrett Manek. Manek is getting ready to shoot.
Right (L to R): Mike Schoonveld and Phil Seng discuss the nuances of shooting clay targets in the snow. Tom Berg photos.

shoot rain or shine – and even in the snow! In fact, the longer we were out there this year, the heavier it snowed!

Phil Seng's wife Laura kept score for the shooters for the first half of the course. It wasn't easy to see in the blinding snow, and keeping the paper score sheets dry was another challenge. Writing on wet paper is not easy! Laura was smarter than the rest of us, though, and

(HOW Fun Shoot continued on next page)

For the HOW Fun Shoot this year, a determined group of HOW members met at the Indiana Gun Club on the northeast side of Indianapolis. It was a day that they won't soon forget! The event took place on Friday, February 16. The snow started coming down before we arrived at the gun club and it never quit. We have made it our policy that we never let the weather cancel this event. We



halfway through the course she handed off the scoresheets and headed for the heated clubhouse. She'd had enough snow for one day! The flying snow made it a challenge for the shooters, as well. At times, the snowflakes were big and wet, and visibility was very poor!



Tom Berg and Mike Schoonveld both started out strong by only missing one clay target (total) out of the first two stations, but their hot streak didn't last very long. The snow thickened and the wind howled, and everyone struggled a bit under the blizzard-like conditions. Some of the stations were back in the trees and the wind was not so bad, and most of the scores improved there. But the stations that were out in the open where the wind was whistling and the snow was blowing horizontally were pretty brutal.

Jarret Manek always shoots well, and he was holding his own for most of

the course. Ken McBroom also shot pretty well, especially since he was shooting a borrowed shotgun that he was not as familiar with. Phil Seng, one of HOW's best shooters, started out very slow, but he gradually picked up the pace and improved his score as the afternoon wore on. Some of our other shooters definitely struggled with the tough snowy conditions!



Top Left: Ken McBroom takes aim in the snow at one of the first shooting stations. **Left (L to R):** Jeff Erdman and Mike Schoonveld watch as Tom Berg fires at a clay target thrown high in the air. **Above:** Jarrett Manek waits for his next turn as he slowly gets covered in snow!

Tom Berg came out on top with a first place score of 72 out of 100. Phil Seng was in second place with a solid score of 67. Jarrett Manek scored a very close third with a 65. Mike Schoonveld just missed the podium

(HOW Fun Shoot continued on next page)

with a total of 64 broken clay targets. Berg usually does not end up as the top shooter at the HOW Fun Shoot, so he figured the snow must have helped him. In fact, he said he hopes there is a blizzard every year at the Fun Shoot!

Believe it or not, HOW's diehard shooters stayed out there during the height of the snowstorm for more than three hours. At the end of it all, everyone was covered with snow – even though they kept brushing it off of their coats and hats throughout the afternoon.

Many thanks go to **Winchester Ammunition** for sponsoring the HOW Fun Shoot and supplying the shotshells this year. It was very much appreciated.

Thank you very much!

Right (L to R): Jarrett Manek and Tom Berg look back during a break in the action and smile as the snow continues to pile up.

Below (L to R): HOW Shooters Jeff Erdman, Mike Schoonveld, Ken McBroom, Jarrett Manek, Phil Seng and Tom Berg pose after completing the 100-round sporting clays course at the Indiana Gun Club. The heavy snow may have made the day's shooting more difficult, but it certainly made it memorable.

Join us at next year's HOW Fun Shoot in April in Madison, IN. The chance of snow will be very low, but never zero!



2024 HOW Conference Returns to the Indiana State Fairgrounds

The 54th meeting of the Hoosier Outdoor Writers took place on the weekend of February 16-17, 2024 (Friday and Saturday) at the Indiana State Fairgrounds in downtown Indianapolis. It has been four years since we had a conference in Indy, and we planned it to coincide with the **Ford Indianapolis Boat, Sport & Travel Show!**

The first activity of the conference was the annual HOW Fun Shoot on Friday, February 16. Several HOW members met at the Indiana Gun Club off of Ohio Road for a round of sporting clays. It was a day to remember! If you didn't make it this year, check out pages 5-7 for the whole story and several cool photos. If you have never attended a HOW Fun Shoot – or if it's been a while – you should join us next year in southern Indiana. I can (almost) promise you it won't snow on us next year!



This year's annual meeting began at 8:00am on Saturday morning, and the attending HOW members and guests assembled at the historic Normandy Barn inside the state fairgrounds. It was snowy and cold, but it was warm inside! As usual, the first hour of the meeting was set aside for registration, coffee, a light continental breakfast, and some social time for the membership.



Justus O'Neill from Visit Indiana informed the membership about some of the exciting things happening in the state's tourism plans for 2024. Tom Berg photos.

HOW President Jarrett Manek called the meeting to order at 9:00am and provided opening remarks, then briefed those present on the day's schedule. He also talked about our conference sponsors and thanked each one of them (please see page 16 for a complete list). Afterwards, he introduced Justus O'Neill, the public relations & social media officer from Visit Indiana. O'Neill welcomed the HOW membership to Indianapolis and talked briefly about tourism trends in Indiana during 2024.

Jarrett Manek then introduced our first seminar speaker of the day: DNR Interpretive Naturalist **Kelley Morgan** from Mounds State Park.

Her presentation was titled "Mounds State Park and Indiana's Pre-

(continued next page)





Seminar speaker Kelley Morgan talks about Mounds State Park and the history of its first people. Photos on this page by Tom Berg.

History.” Morgan described the background of Mounds State Park located northeast of Indianapolis in Madison County, and went into great detail talking about and describing some of the native peoples and early inhabitants of the area. It was very interesting!

She talked about the fact that native people have lived here far longer than most Hoosiers realize. In the Paleoindian Period, which archeologists theorize occurred from 18,500 BCE to 7,000 BCE, people lived and thrived throughout much of Indiana, Ohio and other nearby states. That’s as much as 20,000 years ago!

It is thought that many of the earthen mounds at Mounds State Park were created by native people during the different archeological time periods: the Archaic Period (8,000 BCE to 2,000 BCE), the Woodland Period (1,000 BCE to 1,000 CE) and even the Mississippian/Fort Ancient Period (800 CE to Protohistoric). The earthen structures at Mounds State Park and other areas are fascinating and have a very long and interesting history.

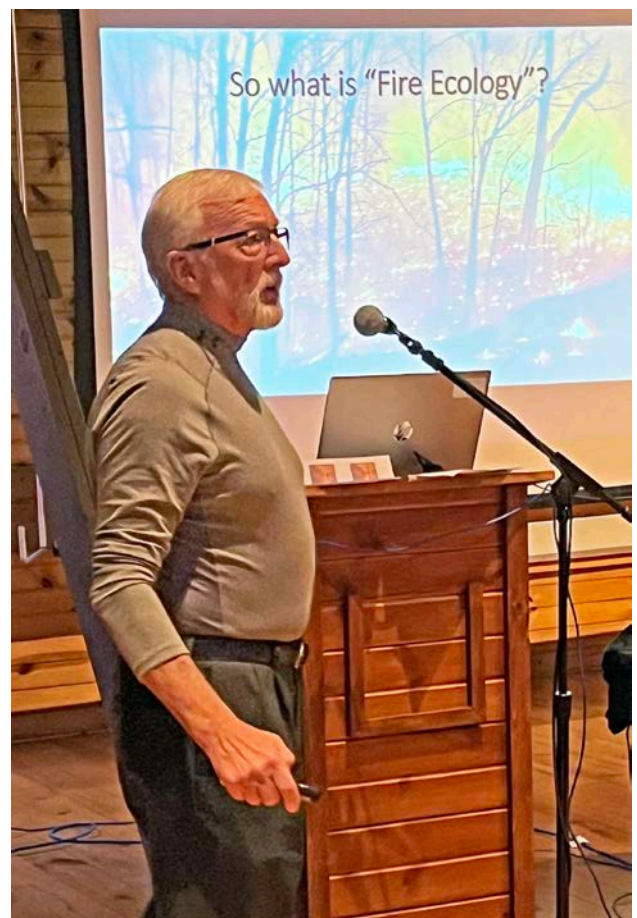
If anyone is interested in learning more about Mounds State Park and

the ancient people who inhabited the area, naturalist Kelley Morgan (kmorgan1@dnr.IN.gov) would be more than happy to help you out. So send her an email note!

The next seminar speaker of the day was **Steve Creech**, a retired fire expert from the Indiana Division of Forestry. His presentation was called “Fire on the Landscape – Friend or Foe?” Historically, people have tried to suppress fire because of its destructive power. But Creech described how many ecosystems in Indiana (and around the country) are “fire dependent” and need periodic fire events to thrive. In fact, the seeds of some plants will only grow after being subjected to fire. Grasslands, shrublands, savannahs and forests all need periodic fires to flourish.

Creech also talked about how humans have used fire to their advantage for thousands of years, manipulating the landscape and using fire to help them travel, hunt, gather food and affect nearby wildlife.

But why are today’s wildfires so large and destructive? Creech discussed the fact that today’s warmer climate is a



Speaker Steve Creech gave a very interesting seminar on fire and how it affects wildlife and the landscape.

(continued next page)

definite factor, and droughts seem to be more common now than in the past. Two centuries of fire suppression have also helped fuel bigger wildfires since brush, leaves and other fuels have been allowed to build up over time. This should encourage us to look at fire a little differently than we have for the past 200 years or so and make fire our ally rather than our enemy.



HOW members listen and take notes as one of our excellent seminar speakers makes a presentation at this year's conference.

Before breaking for lunch, President Jarrett Manek called the HOW Business Meeting to order. HOW Nominating Chairman John Martino presented the proposed slate of new officers for the coming year and the elections commenced. Bob Sawtelle was elected our new President, Marilyn Culler was elected Vice-President and Jarrett Manek will become the Board Chairman. Our new Board members (terms expiring in 2026) include: Mike Berg, Gary Redmon, Rick Bramwell, Don Cranfill and Scott Weaver. Thank you to all of our new volunteers!

After the elections and business meeting were concluded, an excellent buffet lunch was served by the Indiana Fairgrounds catering staff. Everyone relaxed and socialized for an hour before the afternoon activities began.



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A big thank-you goes out to our friends at the **National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF)** for sponsoring the lunch again this year at the HOW conference.



After lunch, it was time to present the awards for the **TIP (Turn-In-a-Poacher/Polluter) Contest**. Once again the TIP Citizen's Advisory Board sponsored a special writing contest for HOW members, asking our writers to promote the TIP mission, the TIP hotline and support the TIP Advisory Board.

Lt. Col. Terry Hyndman and Lt. Brent Brobrink from the IDNR Law Enforcement Division, along with TIP Board member Phil Seng, were present to discuss the TIP program and the TIP mission. They also announced this year's TIP Contest winners and presented the winners with checks and certificates. Please see page 25 for details and photos of the TIP awards presentation.



Above: Lt. Col. Terry Hyndman talks about Indiana's TIP program and how the public can help DNR law enforcement with catching poachers and polluters.
Above Left: Phil Seng (L) and Terry Hyndman (R) thank the HOW membership for supporting TIP in 2023.

After the TIP awards were distributed, newly-elected HOW President Bob Sawtelle stated that it was time to announce the results of the **2024 HOW Awards-In-Craft** contests.

Cash prizes and certificates were awarded to the best of the best in the annual Writing Contest, the Photography Contest and the Broadcast Contest. Please see pages 18-24 for details and results of the annual HOW AIC contests. Participation by the membership was less than last year in the writing categories, but it was much better in the photography section. Surprisingly, no one at all entered the broadcast contests this year. Hopefully we can do better in 2025. After all, you can't win if you don't play!

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Our sincere thanks go out to Curt McAllister and **Toyota Motor Sales** for once again sponsoring our AIC contests and for recognizing the achievements of our members.

HOW Awards-in-Craft winners for 2024 are shown after receiving their awards. **From left to right,** Mike Schoonveld, John Maxwell, John Martino, Tom Berg, Ken McBroom, Mike Lunsford and Marilyn Culler.
Not present: Alan Garbers.



Following the AIC presentations, the first seminar of the afternoon was presented by DNR Director of Communications **Holly Lawson**. Her presentation was titled “What’s New in the Division of Communications”. She brought the HOW membership up to date on some of the initiatives and projects of the Indiana DNR, including information about the planning and construction of the newest state park inn planned for Potato Creek State Park in northern Indiana. It will be the first lodge built at an Indiana state park since 1939!



DNR Communications Director Holly Lawson informs the HOW membership about some of the new things going on in Indianapolis and around the state with the DNR.

Lawson also talked about ways for HOW members to access information from the Indiana DNR through its website, smartphone app, and staff members.

In addition, she discussed some of the current programs the DNR is working on, such as the Indiana Hunt for Hunger program (hunters donating venison for food banks), the Next Level Trails program, the One Million Trees initiative, the Next Level Conservation Trust and the President Benjamin Harrison Conservation Trust.

She also took a few minutes to talk about the upcoming 2024 solar eclipse, and the fact that 54 DNR properties will be in the zone of totality for the event. Also, all state park inns in the zone of totality are already fully booked. Crowds are to be expected! Many of the campgrounds are also fully booked. People from 42 states and two Canadian provinces have made camping reservations so they can view the eclipse from a DNR property.

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The final seminar of the day was titled “Creating A New Generation of Bat Advocates” and was led by DNR State Mammalogist Brad Westrich. He talked about the many different species of bats living in



Above: DNR State Mammalogist Brad Westrich talks about bats and their many benefits to people and the environment.

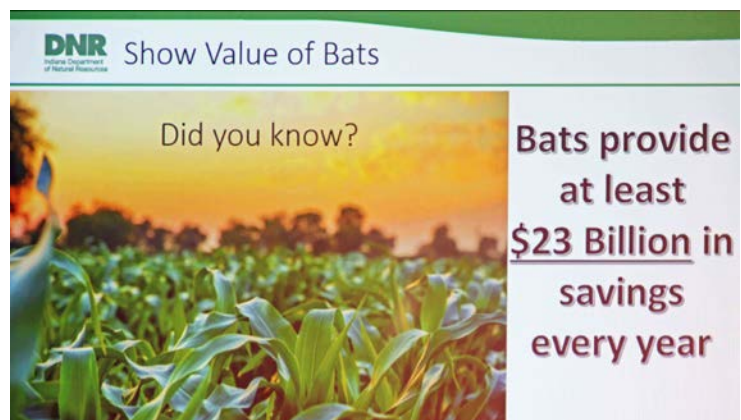
Indiana and the different habitats that each species prefers and needs to survive. Some of the bats he mentioned included the hoary bat, the silver-haired bat, the eastern red bat, the eastern small-footed bat, the southeastern bat, the Rafinesque’s big-eared bat, the little brown bat, the evening bat, the tri-colored bat, the Indiana bat, the gray bat and the northern long-eared bat. Who knew there were so many different species of bats living in Indiana?!!

All of the bats mentioned above are either uncommon, state endangered, federally endangered, or listed as “special concern”. Bats definitely need our help, and the fact that most people don’t understand bats and are



actually afraid of them makes their plight even worse.

Annual events like the ISU Bat Festival (9-30-23) and Bat Week (October 24-31, 2024) help people appreciate bats and everything they do for us. Bats help pollinate human food sources and they eat insects like beetles, moths and mosquitos. Without bats, farmers would need to use more pesticides and insecticides – which no one wants!



Westrich discussed some of the ongoing research and bat monitoring programs that are taking place right now, including acoustic surveys and summer roost counts throughout the state. Bats play a huge role in our ecosystems and they need to be protected. We can help by planting a native garden, install one or more bat houses, and only trim trees in early spring or late fall when the bats are not using them.

We can all help bats by educating people through our articles, photos, broadcasts and podcasts,

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The final activity of the day was the annual HOW Raffle. This is the favorite part of the meeting for many HOW members, and this year's raffle was another excellent one. Raffle Chairman Tom Berg organized a great event this year, easily filling several banquet tables with excellent outdoor products from our loyal HOW Supporting Members (and many new Supporting Members, too). This year he and his helpers secured donations from a total of **74** companies, organizations and individuals. This was even better than last year, but we will be trying even harder for the 2025 conference. We had a great assortment of raffle items again this year, as usual. Tom would also like to thank John Galambos and Mike Berg for their help in securing a number of the items again this year. Thank you!

As is usual for the HOW raffle, some companies donated major products and others contributed smaller items, but all were much-appreciated. A big thank you also goes to the many HOW members who helped unpack and display the raffle items, catalogs, press releases and banners on the tables that morning.



Above: Ken McBroom examines the beautiful CVA Optima muzzleloader that was among the many cool products on the HOW raffle tables. Tom Berg photos.



The moment the raffle tickets went on sale, a long line formed behind the ticket sales table. Just like last year, however, sales went a lot quicker since we had groups of 50 tickets pre-stripped and ready to sell. A big thank you goes to long-time HOW member Brent Wheat for handling the raffle ticket sales again and calling out the numbers for the prizes. Thank you also to Marilyn Culler for assisting Brent with the ticket sales.

As HOW members have come to expect, this year's raffle featured quality as well as quantity when it came to the items to be raffled-off. Firearms enthusiasts were happy with this year's raffle prizes again, as we had a beautiful **Henry** .22 caliber lever-action Golden Boy rifle, along with a fine **Mossberg** Patriot rifle with a synthetic stock and chambered in .243 WIN. We also had a great **Ruger** American Rifle (Generation II) chambered in 6.5 Creedmoor, and an exceptional .50 caliber Optima muzzleloader rifle from **CVA**. If that was

(continued next page)



Above: Brent Wheat and Marilyn Culler did an excellent job of selling tickets for the HOW raffle and keeping the line moving fast. **Right:** Rich Creason spent some time figuring out what he hoped to win! Tom Berg photos.

vacuum sealer, premium ice packs, Yeti cups and other outdoor gear. We also had many gift certificates for products and services from our generous Supporting Members.

The 2024 raffle was another great success! Of course, without the support and generosity of our Supporting Members the raffle would not happen at all. For a complete listing of this year's raffle donors, check page 17. Please support them in your work whenever possible. Also, be sure to send them a thank-you note when you get a chance.

Don't forget to mail or email article tearsheets or online links for your photos, articles, podcasts or radio shows to our corporate members when you feature their products in your work, too. It is important to let them know of your efforts!

not enough, we had multiple **Daisy** airguns, as well!

In addition to the firearms, we also had lots of shooting supplies, an MEC reloading press, gun cleaning products, optics, a premium bow sight, ammunition, gun safes, and much more. Fishermen in the crowd were nearly overwhelmed by an incredible array of fishing lures of all shapes, sizes and colors. We also had a Vexilar Fish Scout underwater camera system, premium rodholders, high-end fishing rods, fishing reels, icefishing gear, fishing line, fishing scents, nets, terminal tackle and tackle boxes.

There was also a Boat US membership, premium hiking boots, NWTF memberships, turkey calls, a high-tech Spypoint cellular trail camera, many great outdoors books, cookbooks and videos, field guides, premium backpacks, high quality sunglasses, hunting gear, shirts, hats, gloves, archery gear, waterproof binoculars, knives, camping gear, a



2024 HOW Conference

The Hoosier Outdoor Writers would like to thank the following conference sponsors:



HOW Raffle Donors - 2024

A big thank-you goes to this year's raffle donors. Please support them in your work whenever possible.

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B'n'M Poles
Black River Tools
BoatUS
BOLT Locks
Bow Spider
BPI Outdoors
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Church Tackle
Cocoons Eyewear
Costa
Creason Wooden Pens
Daisy Outdoor Products
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Dardevle Lures
Egret Baits
Falcon Guides
Finn Tackle Company
Flying Fisherman
The Gapen Company
Hawke Sport Optics
Henry Repeating Arms
HHA Sports
Hi-Mountain Seasonings
Hornady Manufacturing
Jarrett Manek
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Yakima Bait Company
Z-Man Fishing**

The HOW 2024 Awards-In-Craft Contests

The results are in! The winners of the 2024 Awards-In-Craft contest were announced at this year's annual conference at the Indiana State Fairgrounds in February, and we had plenty of outstanding entries. As usual, the writing portion of the contest drew the most interest, as HOW members submitted a total of 66 entries from 12 different HOW members. This was less than the number of entries from 2023 when we had 78 entries, but it's still pretty good. Let's see if we can do better next year and have even more entries in 2025! You can't win if you don't play, and there is no cost to participate. The photography contest had much better participation than last year, as this year we had 33 entries from eight HOW members. Last year we had only 22 photo entries from four HOW members. I know we can do better, since two years ago we had 49 photo entries from 11 members! The Broadcast contest was the biggest surprise as we had no entries at all! Next year our radio broadcasters, podcasters, TV and video professionals need to submit their entries!

Considering the large amount of contest entries, the AIC judges did a great job and most of the competitions were extremely close. In the Writing Contest, only one or two points often separated a first place entry from a second place entry, etc. Many articles landed in 4th place by a mere point or two, also. Since each article could receive up to 300 points this year (100 from each of three judges), those were some close races! We had a total of eight different winners in the contests in 2024, and each took home prize money. Make sure you get in on the fun next year!

Once again this year the Awards-In-Craft contests were sponsored by **Toyota**, so the winners were awarded checks along with certificates to commemorate their big achievements. We would like to thank Curt McAllister, Midwest Public Relations Manager and Outdoor Communications Manager at **Toyota Motor North America**, and all our friends at Toyota for their generous sponsorship in 2024.



HOW members are encouraged to log on to the Toyota website (www.toyotanewsroom.com) to find out more about their products and recent news releases, including information on their educational and community giving efforts.

A special thank-you also goes to our contest coordinators who donated their time and energy to secure judges and get each of the entries reviewed and scored in time for the conference at McCormick's Creek.

Dealing with a large number of submissions which are typically sent right before the deadline always makes coordinating the entries/judges difficult, but the electronic entries really helped. The official 2024 Awards-In-Craft coordinators were: **Phil Bloom** (Writing), **John Martino** (Photography) and **Tom Berg** (Broadcast).

For a complete list of the winners (along with the number of entries for each contest) see the details on the following pages. Please take a look and congratulate your fellow HOW members on their successes.



HOW WRITING CONTEST

(2024: 66 entries from 12 different HOW members)

(2023: 78 entries from 14 different HOW members)

(2022: 100 entries from 17 different HOW members)



Hunting/Trapping (Less Than 1000 Words)

1st: Tom Berg, "The Silent Pheasant Hunter"

2nd: Tom Berg, "Remembering Fred Bear and Early Bowhunting"

3rd: John Martino, "Deer Hunting Season Improves with Age"

Hunting/Trapping (More Than 1000 Words)

1st: Alan Garbers, "The Quest for the (Almost) Perfect Rattlesnake Gun"

2nd: Tom Berg, "Cellular Trail Camera Setup"

3rd: John Martino, "A Trophy is in the Eye of the Beholder"

Fishing (Less Than 1000 Words)

1st: Tom Berg, "Reservoir Crappie Action in the Springtime"

2nd: Tom Berg, "Jigging for Cataract Lake Crappies"

3rd: Ken McBroom, "Bluegills in May"

Fishing (More Than 1000 Words)

1st: Tom Berg, "Road Trips for Trophy Smallmouth Bass"

2nd: Mike Schoonveld, "Migrate East for Erie Eyes"

3rd: Tom Berg, "Trout Fishing on the Dark Side"

Conservation (Less Than 1000 Words)

1st: Mike Lunsford, "Jim Nardi and the 'Little Things That Run the World'"

2nd: Mike Schoonveld, "What a Difference 9,000 Days Make"

3rd: Mike Schoonveld, "Bulging Cost Clouds Carp Plan Outlook"

Conservation (More Than 1000 Words)

1st: Mike Lunsford, "Every Snake is Different"

2nd: Mike Lunsford, "A Community Helps Bees Have Their Day in the Sun"

3rd: -- No Entry --

General Outdoors (Less Than 1000 Words)

1st: Mike Lunsford, "A Walk with Our Friend, Scag"

2nd: Tom Berg, "Finding Invisible Mushrooms"

3rd: Mike Schoonveld, "SPF, the FDA and the Best Numbers for You"

General Outdoors (More Than 1000 Words)

1st: Mike Lunsford, "A Pilgrim at Raccoon Creek"

2nd: Alan Garbers, "Five Beans in the Wheel?"

3rd: Mike Schoonveld, "Rainwear by the Numbers" - **TIE** -

3rd: Mike Lunsford, "Color the Spring Redbud Purple" - **TIE** -

HOW PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST

(2024: 33 entries from 8 different HOW members)

(2023: 22 entries from 4 different HOW members)

(2022: 49 entries from 11 different HOW members)

Hunting/Trapping

1st: John Maxwell, "Dove Hunting Provides a Challenge"

2nd: Tom Berg, "Success in the Pheasant Fields"

3rd: John Maxwell, "Squirrel Hunting With Four-Legged Friends"

Fishing

1st: John Maxwell, "Autumn Fly Fishing Along Sugar Creek"

2nd: Mike Schoonveld, "Demon Rap"

3rd: Ken McBroom, "Crappie on a Hair Jig"

Outdoor Scenic

1st: Tom Berg, "Skipper Butterfly – Summer Speedster"

2nd: John Maxwell, "Goose Pond Sunset"

3rd: Mike Lunsford, "Pretty as a Picture"

Outdoor Recreation

1st: Tom Berg, "The Fearless Thrill Seeker"

2nd: Marilyn Culler, "Crossin' the Creek"

3rd: Mike Lunsford, "On the Trail"



BROADCAST

(2024: No entries)

(2023: 7 entries from 2 different HOW members)

(2022: 8 entries from 3 different HOW members)

Best Radio Broadcast

1st: -- No Entry --

2nd: -- No Entry --

3rd: -- No Entry --

Best TV Broadcast

1st: -- No Entry --

2nd: -- No Entry --

3rd: -- No Entry --

Best Video

1st: -- No Entry --

2nd: -- No Entry --

3rd: -- No Entry --

NOTE: See the following four pages for images of the winning photos in this year's Photography Contest.

WINNING IMAGES FROM THIS YEAR

Hunting /Trapping



"Dove Hunting Provides a Challenge"

First Place - John Maxwell



"Success In the Pheasant Fields"

Second Place - Tom Berg



"Squirrel Hunting w Four-legged Friends"

Third Place - John Maxwell

WINNING IMAGES FROM THIS YEAR

Fishing



"Autumn Fly Fishing along Sugar Creek"

First Place - John Maxwell

Second Place - Mike Schoonveld



"Demon Rap"



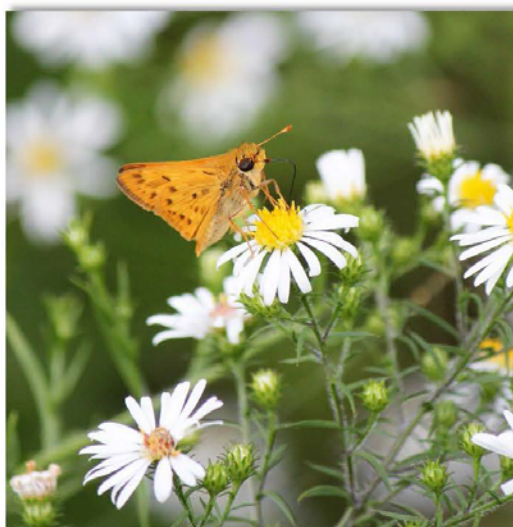
"Crappie on a Hair Jig"

Third Place — Ken McBroom

WINNING IMAGES FROM THIS YEAR

Outdoor Scenic

First Place — Tom Berg



"Skipper Butterfly – Summer Speedster"



"Goose Pond Sunset"

Second Place — John Maxwell



"Pretty as a Picture"

Third Place — Mike Lunsford

WINNING IMAGES FROM THIS YEAR

Outdoor Recreation

First Place – Tom Berg

"The Fearless Thrill Seeker."



Second Place – Marilyn Culler

"Crossin the Creek"

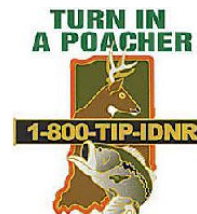
Third Place – Mike Lunsford



"On the Trail"



The TIP – Hoosier Outdoor Writers Turn in a Poacher/Polluter Writing Contest



The Indiana Turn in a Poacher (TIP) Citizen's Advisory Board sponsored a writing contest last year to encourage HOW members to promote the TIP mission, the TIP hotline and support of the TIP Advisory Board. We had good participation and we received some excellent TIP articles.

A complete list of the 2024 winners is printed below. This year the prizes were \$500 for first place; \$300 for second place; \$200 for third place. Please take a look at the results below and congratulate your fellow HOW members on their successes.

Here is the list of the 2024 TIP Contest award winners:

- First Place:** Tom Berg, for his article: **“Indiana’s TIP Program Saves Lives”**
Published in *Midwest Outdoors Magazine*, November, 2023
- Second Place:** Mike Lunsford, for his article: **“Why Should We Not Want to Protect Them?”**
Published in the *Terre Haute Tribune-Star*, October 23, 2023
- Third Place:** Mike Schoonveld, for his article: **“Give Indiana Conservation Officers a TIP”**
Published in *The Captain’s Point of View* blog, November 15, 2023



A special thank-you goes to TIP Board president and contest coordinator, Phil Seng. Phil donated his time and energy to gather the entries, forward them on to the TIP Board, and coordinate between HOW and the TIP Board for this contest.

TIP Contest presentations: **Above Left:** Tom Berg receives his 1st Place award from Lt. Brent Brobrink (L) and Lt. Col. Terry Hyndman (R). **Above Right:** Mike Lunsford receives his 2nd Place award from officers Brobrink and Hyndman. **Right:** 3rd Place winner Mike Schoonveld receives his award from officers Brobrink and Hyndman as well.



Interesting Bird Sightings in the Great Outdoors

We have been asking HOW members to submit photos and reports about interesting or unusual birds that they have seen during their outdoor adventures. The sightings do not have to take place in Indiana; anywhere in the world is fair game. All photos on these pages were submitted by those reporting.

We hope this page will not only interest bird enthusiasts, but all HOW members who enjoy spending time in the great outdoors (i.e. everybody). You may just learn something new, too!

Report from Bill Keaton:

HOW legal advisor Bill Keaton is an avid turkey hunter, and he had an interesting turkey encounter earlier this spring. Here is his report:

“At the end of March,” said Keaton, “I watched a magnificent display of a popular spring ritual. A hen **Wild Turkey** (*Meleagris gallopavo*) came picking her way along the edge of our yard. We have a big bottom field behind the house, so we only mow about thirty feet and have made it our yard. Consequently, the hen was very close. As I watched the hen, my eye caught movement in the direction from which the hen had come. It was a beautiful strutting tom turkey following the hen. He strutted right down the same path the hen had taken, giving me quite a show.”



“The hen and the tom ‘danced’ behind our house for over an hour before nonchalantly walking into the woods. I am hoping the tom will still be close by when turkey season opens!”

Another report from Bill Keaton:

“On April 10th and 11th we had steady heavy rain here in Owen County. By morning we had two inches in the rain gauge. There was a lull in the rain around 9:00am that lasted several hours. About 9:15 I was doing my morning exercises when a mature **Bald Eagle** (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) glided low and close, right outside my window. I watched it, and to my delight it landed in the tree closest to our home.”



“As I watched, it spread its wings and began to preen. He sat in the tree for about an hour with his wings out apparently drying the feathers from all the rain. When he finally left, I spotted him on the ground at the edge of our pond. I didn’t see him leave, but where he was perched he had a perfect view of the pond to look for fish at the surface.”



“I can’t say for sure, but I assume he took one of my catfish that are often at the surface since I feed them on the surface with a floating fish food. He stayed there at the edge of the pond for several minutes and then took off. He was too far away to tell if he was carrying a fish.”

HOW members are encouraged to send their interesting bird photos to newsletter editor and bird enthusiast Tom Berg via email (thomas.berg@comcast.net) for use in future editions of the “Interesting Bird Sightings” page. Don’t worry, it does not need to be a rare bird. Your fellow HOW members would love to see your bird pictures.

Indiana Department of Natural Resources
402 W. Washington St.
Indianapolis, IN 46204

For immediate release: February 28, 2024

Indiana DNR Partners with Lake County Group to Improve Chinook Salmon Stocking in East Chicago

The Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is partnering with the Lake County Fish and Game Protective Association to improve Chinook salmon stocking in East Chicago's harbor.

The effort is a net pen project. Net pens are floating enclosures that hold raised fish while allowing water to freely flow through. The pens protect stocked juvenile Chinook (i.e., smolts) from predators in the first several days in the harbor as they acclimate to their new environment before swimming to Lake Michigan and feeding for the next few years. Once they are mature adults, the Chinook return to their stocking site to spawn.



"Raising salmon smolts is a resource-intensive process, so anything we can do to protect them after stocking is a big win," said Rob Ackerson, manager of DNR's Mixsawbah State Fish Hatchery. "Lake County Fish and Game Protective Association has been a good partner for our hatchery, and we are excited to further our collaboration with them to improve our Lake Michigan fishery."

Initially, half of the Chinook slated for stocking in East Chicago will be acclimated in net pens, while the other half will continue to be stocked directly in the harbor. Starting in 2025, biologists will use coded wire tags to mark each lot of fish with their own unique numbers to evaluate the success of the project.

"Coded wire tag technology is a really powerful tool for biologists, and with our anglers turning in tagged fish, we will be able to best improve the fishery by making decisions with accurate data," said Ben Dickinson, the Lake Michigan fisheries research biologist.

More information about Lake Michigan fishing can be found at on.IN.gov/lake-michigan-fishing.

Media contact: Ben Dickinson, Lake Michigan Fisheries Research Biologist, DNR Fish & Wildlife, phone: 219-874-8219, or email: bdickinson@dnr.IN.gov.

Indiana Department of Natural Resources
402 W. Washington St.
Indianapolis, IN 46204

For immediate release: March 11, 2024

Angler Catches New State Record Smallmouth Bass on Monroe Lake

Hoosier angler Rex Remington caught an 8-pound, 4-ounce smallmouth bass on Monroe Lake on March 3, smashing the previous record set in 1992 at Twin Lake in LaGrange County by one pound. The new record fish was released alive back into Monroe Lake.

Smallmouth bass are one of Indiana's three species of black bass, along with largemouth bass and spotted bass. Pound for pound, smallmouth are known among anglers as the most spirited fighters of the black bass. Many anglers associate smallmouth bass with streams and natural lakes, but several Indiana reservoirs consistently have smallmouth catches, including Patoka and Brookville in addition to Monroe.

Fishing for smallmouth in lakes is best in early spring, as they feed aggressively before spawning. As water temperatures warm, smallmouth move into rocky points and flat rocky areas. They are opportunistic carnivores, consuming insects, crayfish, and fish. Lures that imitate prey, such as spinnerbaits, crayfish-patterned crankbaits, surface lures, and live minnows or crayfish are effective.

Monroe Lake, in Monroe County just 10 miles south of Bloomington, is Indiana's largest reservoir at 10,750 acres and has nine public boat ramps. More information is at on.IN.gov/monroelake.

To learn more about the Indiana Record Fish Program, please see on.IN.gov/recordfish.

Media contact: Dave Kittaka, District 5 Fish Biologist, DNR Fish & Wildlife, phone: 812-287-8306, or email: dkittaka@dnr.IN.gov.



Indiana Department of Natural Resources
402 W. Washington St.
Indianapolis, IN 46204

For immediate release: April 29, 2024

Outdoor Indiana Features Dragonflies

Outdoor Indiana magazine's May/June issue features a cover story on the 97 species of dragonflies that can be found in the Hoosier State and how to enjoy watching them.

The issue also includes an article on Tippecanoe River State Park, which is near Winamac, and the upcoming vintage camper rallies to be held at Clifty Falls and Spring Mill state parks in June and August, respectively.

Outdoor Indiana is available now at Indiana State Park Inns across the state for \$4. You can subscribe online or by phone for \$15 for one year (six issues, a 27% savings over cover price) or \$28 for two years (12 issues, a 42% savings).

Subscribe at ShopINStateParks.com or by calling 317-233-3046. To read article excerpts, go to OutdoorIndiana.org.

To view more DNR news releases, please see dnr.IN.gov.

Media contact:

Marty Benson, DNR managing editor of Outdoor Indiana magazine, phone: 317-233-3853.



Strange Sounds in the Night!

by Jarrett Manek

For Valentine's Day, somewhere love is always in the air. Just recently on the night of February 14th, my son quickly came running into the house. I could tell with his tone that he was both excited and concerned at the same time – if that makes any sense. He claimed there was an odd sound outside down behind the playground set and presumed that it was two deer fighting where they had locked-up their antlers. He exclaimed that they were close and causing a lot of commotion.

As a park naturalist of nearly 30 years and an outdoorsman, I have heard a lot of sounds and find myself somewhat knowledgeable. I can honestly say that there is not a lot of outdoor related oddities that I have not experienced. However, upon stepping out on my porch in the dark of night, I found myself very intrigued and wondering what we were actually hearing. It was a sound that was new to me. It did make a lot of loud rustling in the tree line and was moving slowly towards the field along the woods. It was walking and seemed be a mammal of some sort. The sound, on the other hand, is hard to describe. It was definitely loud, and it did sound like two bucks fighting at first. Two, one antlered bucks fighting! The typical tine clanking of fighting bucks was not what we were hearing. It was more like two large pipes or pieces of wood getting hit together.

I hesitated to think it was our distant neighbor acting like a fool, but he would not have been trespassing. I listened for voices and heard none. I walked down towards the sounds in my evening moccasins, trying to get a better idea of what it could be. I turned and found my son at my side. Getting nervous and increasingly scared, he asked, "Do you think it is a Hairy Man?" The look on my face told him what I really thought of that!

I was very perplexed and my toes were getting wet from the soggy ground. The sound was moving away from us into the field – a picked bean field. Still convinced it was two fighting deer, I coaxed my son to head into the field to see if he could get a light on whatever it was. I did not want to muddy up my moccasins, so I stayed back, not too concerned about the mystery animal or animals.

It was not long, and my son came scurrying back just as scared and nervous as before but trying not to show it. The sound seemed to come from a sinkhole and ditch area of the field. We could still hear it clearly at over 300 yards away. My curiosity got the best of me, so I changed into my boots, grabbed a floodlight and also night vision. Plus, my pride really wanted to determine what I could not figure out.

Getting back on the track, we were getting closer, but somehow whatever was making the sound eluded us. We were within 10-20 yards at one point and it would slowly walk around us. We could hear its footsteps on the other side of the brush, but the calling had stopped. As it moved away, the calling would start up again. We thought maybe it was a coyote or raccoon with a trap caught on its leg, but we were still unsure.

It finally seemed to get spooked and fade away down in the creek bottom, then turned around and came back towards us. This time, with our lights off and staying quiet, we waited. It approached closer in the tall weeds it was about to come into the open field just a few feet away. Now it split up and there were two. Two different animals. Two sets of calls. All like a "single rhythmic clanking". Maybe it was a coyote following a wounded animal.

My son was ready to bolt. I had to tell him to stay steady, hold the line like in a war movie. Wait for the light, wait for it. "Now! Hit the light," I said. Oddly enough and to our surprise, out came a fat little opossum!

Still perplexed, we went back inside and did some research and found out that now is the time for opossums to be looking for a mate. However, the sounds we googled could not compare to the sounds we actually heard him make. It was louder and very distinct. For sure, Valentine's Day will never be the same when love comes a calling!



HOW Member News

Troy McCormick Has More Fun with Drones

HOW Past President Troy McCormick from Jeffersonville is a serious drone pilot, and he uses drones for both business and pleasure. Here is a recent report from him:

“I have been flying drones for ten years and I love the view when filming from above,” reported McCormick.

“I am always looking for the next wildlife photo, or video clip, when I am outdoors and I use a wide variety of camera equipment for different situations. The latest addition to my gear bag is a DJI Mavic 3 Pro drone.”

“The size of this drone makes it extremely easy to take on any trip, and the Hasselblad camera gives me 48 MP photos and 5.1k HD video. However, the main reason I upgraded to this new model is because it comes with not one, but three camera lenses!”

“While the drone is in the air, I can tap on my controller screen and change from a 24mm wide angle lens, to a 70mm standard lens, to a 166mm telephoto lens. I no longer need to be physically close to my subject (boat, person or animal) to get great close-up photos and video. With previous drones I had to fly in close to get the shot I wanted, but the noise of the propellers could be heard on the TV host’s microphone, or the animal was often scared off from the noise.”

“In the photos here you’ll see a boat (not us), with an osprey in the tree above it. With the drone hovering in the same spot, 75 yards from the tree, I was able to photograph the unsuspecting osprey in the tree top with all three lenses, allowing me to pick the shot I wanted, and without disturbing the bird at all.”

“I’m looking forward to a whole new view on the world with this drone,” said McCormick.

It looks like a lot of fun!



Lunsford Honored for Photography and Writing

HOW member Mike Lunsford, a Parke County writer and photographer, was recently honored for his work with both the camera and the keyboard.

Lunsford, who primarily writes for the *Terre Haute Tribune-Star* and *Terre Haute Living* magazine, took home top photography honors in the annual Covered Bridge Art Association's Abstract Show in April for his entry, "Monarch with a Twist of Aster." This is the second time Lunsford has won the abstract competition.

Lunsford was also very surprised on April 26th to learn that he had been named "Best Columnist," as chosen by the *Tribune-Star's* readership in March in its annual "Reader's Choice Awards" competition. This is the fourth time Lunsford has been honored with a "Reader's Choice," and says, "...the award supports his belief that people enjoy and appreciate stories about nature, wildlife, and conservation."

Congrats, Mike!



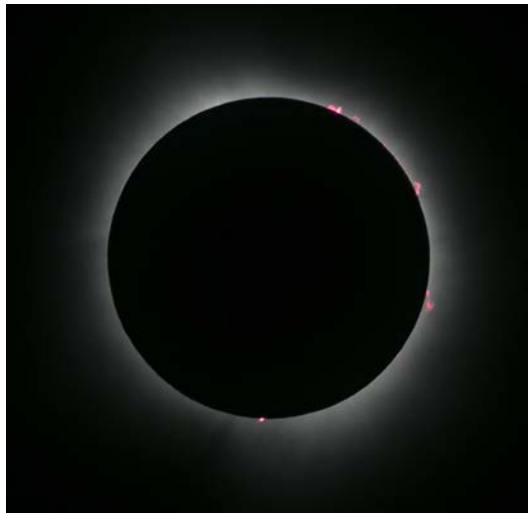
Mike Lunsford is shown with his winning photo and jurist/judge Cathleen Hogan at the Covered Bridge Art Gallery in Rockville, IN.

Lunsford Captures Cool Eclipse Photos

Mike Lunsford was also out and about on April 8, 2024 to view and photograph the total solar eclipse. We know several HOW members also took photos, but take a look at these. They are very nice!

"I have attached two solar eclipse photos," said Lunsford. "I have never done any solar photography before."

The first one clearly shows the 'solar prominences', the colored flares of light people seem to be fascinated with. The second shows the eclipse at totality."



Membership Changes and Member Contact Info

The following name represents our newest HOW member. Please make a note of his contact info:

Brenden Terrill: 130 North Sheridan Ave., Indianapolis, IN 46219, phone: 773-750-6094,
Email: brenden.terrill@gmail.com

If your email address, phone number or other contact info changes, please notify HOW Executive Director Tom Berg at thomas.berg@comcast.net or by mail at 2142 Nondorf Street, Dyer, IN 46311.

Manek Celebrates Turkey Camp and “The Hat”

HOW Chairman of the Board Jarrett Manek looks forward to the spring turkey camp every year, and this year was just a little more special for him. Here is his report:

“Success is not only worn with a hat, but memories of another year at Blue River Turkey Camp,” Manek explained. “The opening few days of the season provided my daughter Abby with memories that will be hard to beat. For the ten hunters who set out for an early morning pursuit of a tom turkey, several were successful. Abby’s turkey, though, proved to be the top bird and provided her with the honor of wearing ‘The Hat’ two years in a row. This was an honor never achieved consecutively – until now. Weighing in at 28 lbs with an 11-inch beard and 1-inch spurs, it was a whopper of a bird! Her success was enjoyed by not only her, but by all of our friends at camp. It was especially gratifying for me, since it was another year we could spend together in the woods.”

“There are all kinds of traditions for holidays. There are traditions for events. There are ‘rights of passage’ for young men or ladies. The traditions created during hunting camps can create the legacy of both fun and meaningful memories. There is sometimes a sip of bourbon at the end of the day rehashing the hunt and telling embellishments. But receiving ‘The Hat’ at turkey camp is not just an honor for harvesting the biggest bird, it is a legacy passed down from generations, friends, and family throughout the years. For four days of comradery, good stories and great food, in the back of



everyone’s mind, is the anticipation of bagging a bird. Even though not everyone gets a bird or ‘a ribbon’ by the end of the camp, everyone definitely has a great time.”

“The tradition of ‘The Hat’ originated as a donation from a local park ranger. Each person who receives the hat must add a piece of memorabilia representing the year or something about them or their hunt. A specially embroidered hat band was added, along with pins, photos, feathers and more. Even more significant are the signatures on the underneath side of the brim. None will likely be valuable someday, but each one has a heartfelt memory. Some of those signatures will never have another chance to be added again. With the passing of several of our

friends, their memories of the hunt and turkey camp will stay with the hat!”

“It is not your everyday apparel and it might seem goofy to wear it, but it is an honor to receive it. To be awarded ‘The Hat’ has a lot more meaning to each of us who has been to hunting camp.”

Mullendore Enjoys Minnesota Trapping And Deer/Moose Shed Hunting

HOW member Nate Mullendore from Minnesota (formerly from Indiana) is an active outdoorsman, staying busy throughout the year with fishing, hunting and trapping. Here is a recent note from him:

"I've been trapping beavers this past winter, and I have sold a decent number of them this year," said Mullendore. "I got \$32 each for the big blankets - skinned out but not fleshed/stretched. My average was \$18 each for the ones I've sold so far. I keep a lot of the meat and am hoping to



make some summer sausage and snack sticks with it once I get my smoker back online. It's good stuff! I run a trail camera on my carcass pile and pretty much all of the critters agree, too. The beaver tails are actually great as dog treats. My dogs will eat the whole thing, skin and all.

The fat is an awesome ice fishing bait too. I caught a mess of crappies this winter with small jigs tipped with a chunk of fat. It's durable on the hook and produces a greasy sheen that's apparently quite attractive to fish. You can tan the leather from the tails too, but I haven't messed around with that yet."

"The moose sheds were from up in the boundary waters. Minnesota's moose population is down to ~3000 individuals, which is one third what it was even a decade ago. I think the season has been closed for about that long now, though tribal members still take a few every year. Looking for sheds is probably as close as I'll get to Minnesota moose hunting in my lifetime, unfortunately. Lots of factors at play – wolves take a lot of the calves, deer give them a parasite (known as brain worm) that kills them, warmer winters aren't killing off ticks the way they used to, etc."

"At some point, I wouldn't be surprised if climate change results in Minnesota trading spruce grouse and moose for armadillos and opossums. I don't mind a more mild winter, but I don't think anyone is excited about that exchange."



The 2024 Bayou Bill Conservation Award Granted to Retired DNR Biologist John Castrale

Every year, the Hoosier Outdoor Writers presents a conservation award to a deserving individual or group in memory of the legendary Crothersville, Indiana, outdoor writer Bayou Bill Scifres. Scifres was one of the founding members of HOW in 1969, and he was the president of HOW six times – more than anyone else in HOW history. His outdoors column was published in *The Indianapolis Star* newspaper for 50 years, and he was a great proponent of conservation in the Hoosier state. This award has been lovingly named the Bayou Bill Conservation Award.

The 2024 Bayou Bill Conservation Award was recently presented to retired DNR Nongame Bird Biologist John Castrale, for his dedicated research and conservation work with Indiana's bald eagles, peregrine falcons, ospreys and others. Former HOW board member Teena Ligman presented the award on behalf of HOW at the annual Friends of Spring Mill State Park meeting on Tuesday, March 19.

“There were probably more than 30 people in attendance at the meeting when John received the award,” said Ligman. “I had invited some of his coworkers from DNR to attend, and Steve Backs, the game bird biologist, was able to make it, so that was nice.”

“John was pleased at the recognition, and said he had been interviewed many times by Bayou Bill, as had Steve Backs,” continued Ligman. “They both had fond memories of Bill, so the award meant a lot to John.”



Former HOW board member Teena Ligman recently presented the 2024 Bayou Bill Conservation Award to retired DNR Nongame Bird Biologist John Castrale.

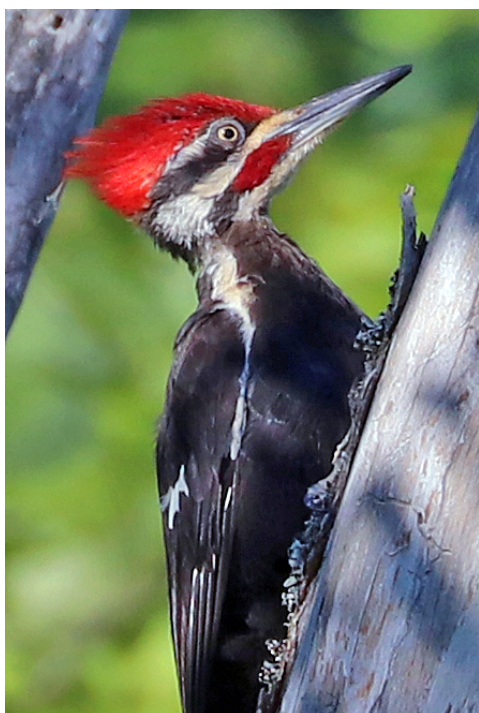
“I was pleasantly surprised to receive the Bayou Bill Conservation Award,” Castrale said in a follow-up letter to Executive Director Tom Berg. “I have many good memories of conversing with Bill Scifres back in the day. What a great fellow he was. I’m glad to see that the Hoosier Outdoor Writers is still active and I miss the time when outdoor writers like Hal Wolford, Phil Bloom, Phil Potter and Steve Ford had regular columns in newspapers. In fact, I miss newspapers in general! But change is inevitable and we all have to adapt. Interactions between state wildlife agencies and outdoor writers are vitally important in promoting wildlife conservation and related outdoor recreation.”

“I feel privileged to have had a career where I was able to work with some fascinating birds and witness the recovery of bald eagles, peregrine falcons and osprey in Indiana. Thank you for the recognition. Best of luck to you and the Hoosier Outdoor Writers.”

Unusual Nature Photos from the Hoosier Outdoors

Sponsored by Z-Man Fishing Products

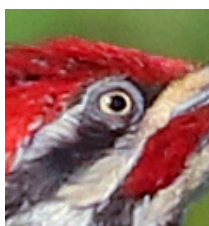
The Pileated Woodpecker is a Carpenter Ant Specialist



Close-up



Original



The “What is it?” photo from the last issue was almost too easy, since it was correctly identified by eleven (11) HOW members. Mike Schoonveld, Phil Bloom, Bill Keaton, Jack Spaulding, Brandon Butler, Troy McCormick, Mike Lunsford, John Maxwell, Terri Trowbridge, Rich Creason and Gary Redmon were all able to identify it. When we drew a name at random for the **Cocoons** sunglasses, Phil Bloom was the lucky winner. Congrats, Phil! We will mail the prize to you.

As can be seen in the photo to the left, the mystery creature for this issue was a male Pileated Woodpecker (*Dryocopus pileatus*). One of the largest woodpeckers in North America, and perhaps the most interesting, the pileated woodpecker stands up to 19 inches tall and has a wingspan of 30 inches. They are actually the second-largest woodpecker in the USA, after the critically rare ivory-billed woodpecker. They are mostly black in color, with some white on their wings and neck and a bright red crest on top of their head.

Insects are the main food of pileated woodpeckers, and carpenter ants are their favorite snack, by far. They also eat moths, spiders, caterpillars, beetles, beetle larvae and other insects. Large dead trees and decaying logs are their normal targets when searching for ants, but they also hammer away at live trees. They make very large rectangular holes in tree trunks, and this is one way to know if there are pileated woodpeckers nearby.

For this issue, our friends at **Z-Man Fishing** have donated a nice prize package for the HOW member who guesses the right answer to this issue’s “What Is It?” question. This time the prize will be a pair of Z-Man fishing hats and an assortment of Z-Man fishing lures. See below for more info.



Berg Poses Another Nature Photo “What Is It?” Question

Tom Berg has posed another Nature Photo mystery. The photo shown at right is part of a close-up of a creature that can be found throughout most of Indiana, but you probably won’t see it in your own back yard. Does it look familiar? Have you ever seen this color pattern when spending time outdoors? **This is likely to be a very tough one!**

This creature may be easy for some people to identify, and harder for others. But we’ll see. Do you know of any creatures that look like this? This time you will have to identify the exact species. If you think it’s a species of frog, for example, go ahead and guess “Bullfrog” (of course, it’s not a frog). If you think you know the answer, send an email to me at thomas.berg@comcast.net. If you’re right, you will be entered in this issue’s prize drawing!



As mentioned, **Z-Man Fishing** (www.zmanfishing.com) has donated a very nice pair of Z-Man fishing hats and an assortment of Z-Man fishing lures including Chatterbaits, ElaZtech soft plastic GobyZ and Micro Finesse jigs for the HOW member who guesses the right answer to this issue’s “What Is It?” nature question. If multiple people guess correctly, we’ll draw a winner at random from the pool of correct entries. All photos on this page were taken by Tom Berg.

HOW Supporting Member News

These pages are devoted to the loyal supporting members of the Hoosier Outdoor Writers. Brief descriptions of new products, award-winning products and press releases are listed here. HOW members interested in reading more can visit the supporting member websites or call or email the media contact for more information.

Sporting Classics Offers Interesting Books for Hunters with Bird Dogs

Columbia, SC: Sporting Classics Magazine was established in 1981 and is the leading magazine for discovering the best in hunting and fishing worldwide. Written for active sportsmen who love to read, each issue is a big, thick volume packed with stories on all the things you love: guns, knives, adventures, art, gundogs, collectibles, along with biographies of talented writers, craftsmen, painters and more.

However, there is much more to Sporting Classics than just the magazine. There is also Sporting Classics Art, Sporting Classics Books, Sporting Classics Adventure, Sporting Classics Television and much more. One of the great books offered by Sporting Classics is *Training and Hunting Bird Dogs* by Scott Linden. This 195-page softcover book includes lessons on dogs' desires, skills, and abilities to learn, care and feeding, health and safety, preparation, and shooting. *Training and Hunting Bird Dogs* is the ultimate guide to maximizing happiness and minimizing frustration whether out on the hunt or relaxing in the backyard.

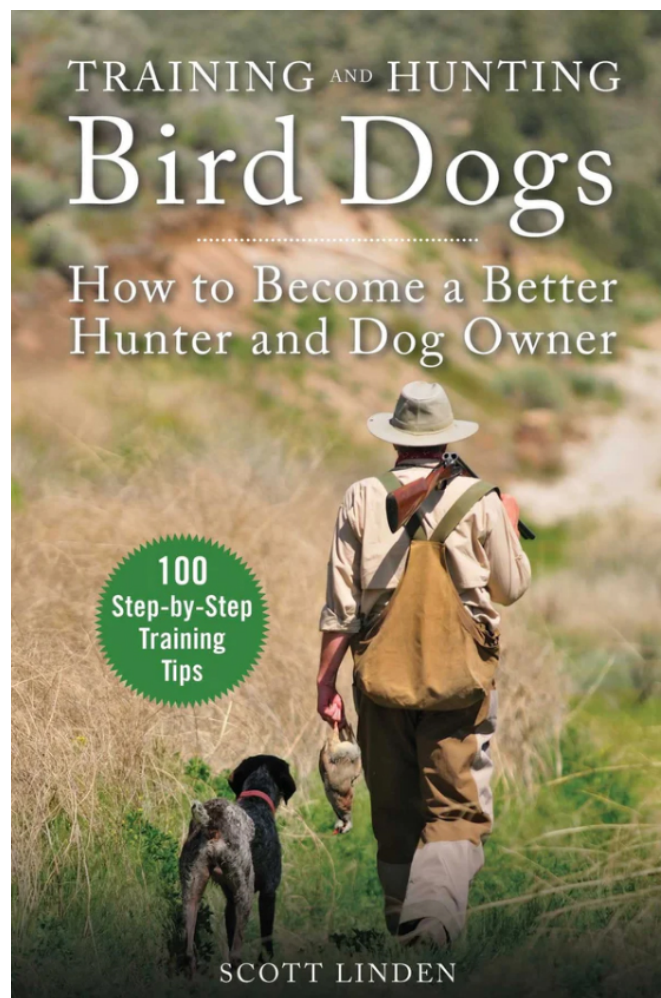
If you hunt for pheasants, grouse, quail, and other upland birds, forming a partnership with your dog can be a daunting challenge. *Wingshooting USA*'s Scott Linden is here to help. *Training and Hunting Bird Dogs* fills in the blanks for the wingshooter and dog owner with solid advice that will improve dog and hunter's levels of communication, respect, and hunting efficiency. Even better, Linden's lovable, often hilarious tone makes taking advice on training, strategizing, and partnership enjoyable to human and canine alike.

Don't be a student at the school of hard knocks – *Training and Hunting Bird Dogs* advances an upland hunter's skills quickly, creatively, and without any of the angst of more difficult methods.

About the Author:

Scott Linden is the creator and host of the television show *Wingshooting USA*, an active magazine writer, podcaster (UplandNation.com) and blogger (scottlindenoutdoors.com). He also publishes a monthly newsletter devoted to helping readers become better hunters and dog owners. His Upland Nation University seminars and speeches have been presented throughout the country. He lives near Bend, Oregon, with his wife and German wirehaired pointer, Flick.

Media Contact: For more information, HOW members may go online to www.sportingclassics.com or contact Ryan Coleman, email: ryan@sportingclassics.com, phone: 803-744-9015.



HOW Supporting Member News

Seaguar Releases Three Exclusive JDM Fishing Lines to the North American Market

Louisville, KY (March 17) – The Japanese Domestic Market, known as JDM, has a reputation for innovative products with extreme detail developed for the best performance. This is true of many industry segments, including fishing, where products that originate in the "Land of the Rising Sun" are highly sought after by serious anglers looking for something different that performs at a higher level than mainstream products.

Seaguar, the brand that invented fluorocarbon fishing line in Japan in 1971, has announced that three products previously only available in Japan will now be available to North American anglers. R18 Fluorocarbon mainline, PEX8 Lure Edition Braid and Grand Max Fluorocarbon Leader will be available at retail stores this March, starting at the Bassmaster Classic.

This decision came, in part, at the request of enthusiast anglers. "Many of these products are known to North American anglers who follow the Japanese bass scene," said Seaguar General Manager Gerry Benedicto. "These are existing products that have been designed to get the best performance out of lures in highly pressured fisheries in Japan. Now, anglers here can fish these unique JDM lines and experience them firsthand."

Two-time Bassmaster Elite Series Angler of the Year Brandon Palaniuk has aligned himself with several Japanese-based brands. He has also spent time fishing in Japan and learning about the fishing culture, and he's excited that American anglers will have a chance to see these innovative lines.

"The biggest thing about the products that originate in Japan is the attention to detail and how they make small changes to get big results," shared Palaniuk. "There are quite a few bass anglers in Japan and not as much access to fisheries as we have here, so their bass are extremely pressured. Their product designs are out of necessity; they are very forward-thinking to enable them to catch more fish in those situations, and that's what you see when you fish these three lines."

R18 fluorocarbon is a line designed for excellent casting and performance and with Seaguar's exclusive double-structure process with two custom Seaguar 100% fluorocarbon resins to create a line with exceptional knot and tensile strength. It's incredibly soft and supple for excellent casting distances. R18 is offered on 100-meter spools, which is 109 yards and available in 4 through 20 lb. tests, including nontraditional sizes: 5, 7, and 14 lb. tests.

Palaniuk says the real-world applications for this line are endless, but he's found it exceptional for moving baits like suspending jerkbaits. "You get extreme strength, but it's still soft and manageable at the same time," he began. "I've



HOW Supporting Member News

(continued from previous page)

found that you can go down one size and still have the strength of a higher-rated line. Using a smaller diameter line is critical with jerkbaits so you get better-cutting action, more roll and flash from your bait, and you'll also get another foot of diving depth."



PEX8 Lure Edition micro braid is a high-performance 8-strand braided line with exceptionally thin diameters. Compared to other braided lines, it is 22 percent thinner. Its coloring is high visibility Passion Pink with contrasting lime green segments every meter, allowing anglers to gauge lure depths and detect bites by watching the line. It's offered in 200-meter spools, which is 219 yards and comes in six unique pound test sizes, including 12, 16, 18, 21, 24, and 33 lb. tests.

The first thing that Palaniuk noticed when spooling up PEX8 was how thin it was. "This stuff is incredibly thin and you have to change your thinking and look at the diameter of the line instead of just the pound test on the box," he said. "I've bumped up to 18 and 21 lb. test sizes for PEX8 where I would have normally used 10 or 15 lb. test braid. It's that much thinner."

The diameter of a braided line is crucial, according to Palaniuk, for many different fishing scenarios. "The smaller diameters have many benefits, especially when fishing with techniques like mid-strolling while watching your forward-facing sonar," he began. "For one, the bait moves correctly with a more natural action because there's less resistance. It also eliminates the bow in your line that happens with thicker braids, so your bait will get to those fish you see on your screen much faster. Eliminating that slack leads to much better hooksets, so you'll also land more fish."

Seaguar Grand Max is a specially formulated leader material with low stretch and excellent strength and sensitivity. Created in Japan in 1999, Grand Max is a class of its own for leader material and made with Seaguar's exclusive double-structure process, which creates small diameters and exceptional knot and tensile strength. Spooled onto pocket-thin spools, it fits anywhere and multiple spools can be snapped together for added convenience.

Palaniuk's initial thoughts on Grand Max had nothing to do with the line itself; instead, they were about the spool design. "The spools are awesome and way more compact. I love how you can stack them together in a much more manageable size," he said. "The line is phenomenal as a leader material with such thin diameters. I also like the addition of the 7 lb. test because sometimes 6 is a little too light, and you want something thinner than 8 lb. for those pressured fisheries with clear water."

Grand Max comes on 60-meter spools, which is 66 yards and is available in sizes from 2 lb. to 40 lb. tests, including unique pound test sizes: 3, 7, 17, and 35 lb. tests.

For more information, call 502-883-6097, write Kureha America Inc., 4709 Allmond Ave., Suite 4C, Louisville, KY 40209, or visit us at www.seaguar.com or on Facebook.



Media Contact: For more information, HOW members may contact Chuck Reynolds (Omnivore Agency), email: chuck@omnivoreagency.com or by phone: 414-224-5022.

HOW Supporting Member News

Indiana Destination Development Corporation Named Travel Media Competition Winner

Indianapolis, IN (March 5, 2024) — The [North American Travel Journalists Association](#) (NATJA) announced that the [Indiana Destination Development Corporation](#) (IDDC) won GOLD in the 32nd Annual NATJA Awards Competition in the Destination Video category.

This awards competition honors the best of the best in travel journalism, photography and destination marketing covering all aspects of the travel industry. The IDDC won the GOLD award for their 2023 summer ['Get IN' destination video](#). This is the latest award for the 'IN Indiana' campaign. A full list of awards for the campaign can be found [here](#).

“Submissions for this year’s awards competition included a diverse group of journalists, publications, and destination marketing organizations from North America,” said NATJA CEO, Helen Hernandez. “Selection of the winners by our independent panel of judges was particularly difficult this year because of the outstanding quality and broad range of articles, images and marketing campaigns submitted for consideration. I wish to extend my congratulations to all the winners for their exceptional work in enhancing the travel experience of those exploring new destinations and adventures.”



Judges for the competition included award-winning newspaper and magazine editors as well as educators from across journalism platforms. One first place (Gold) winner is chosen in each of the categories along with second place (Silver), third place (Bronze), and Honorable Mentions. To qualify for an award or honor, work had to be published from October 1, 2022, through September 30, 2023.

“We are thrilled to have been recognized by the NATJA for our efforts,” said IDDC Secretary and CEO, Elaine Bedel. “The 'Get IN' video is a testament to the dedication and creativity of our team. We are excited to continue inspiring travelers to explore all there is to offer IN Indiana.”

Founded in 1991, NATJA is a travel journalism industry leader that fosters high quality journalism by supporting the professional development of its members, providing exceptional program benefits and valuable resources, honoring the excellence of journalism throughout the world, and promoting travel and leisure to the general public. NATJA also publishes *TravelWorld International Magazine* (www.travelworldmagazine.com). For more information about NATJA or a complete list of award winners and honorable mentions, visit www.natja.org.

Media Contacts: For more information, please contact:

Amy Howell, VP of Tourism, Marketing and Communications

Email: AmHowell@visitindiana.com or cell: 317.741.1320.

Justus O'Neil, Public Relations and Social Media Officer

Email: JOneil@visitindiana.com or cell: 463.245.8562.



HOW's Supporting Member Websites

Al's Goldfish Company - www.alsgoldfish.com
Alps Brands - www.alpsbrands.com
Archery Trade Association - www.archerytrade.org
B'n'M Pole Company - www.bnmpoles.com
Black River Tools - www.blackrivertools.com
BoatUS - www.boatus.com
BOLT Locks - www.boltlock.com
Bow Spider - www.bowspider.com
BPI Outdoors - www.BPIguns.com
Cauldryn - www.cauldryn.com
Church Tackle Company - www.churchtackle.com
Cocoons Eyewear - www.cocoons.com
Costa - www.costadelmar.com
Daisy Outdoor Products - www.daisy.com
Danner Boots - www.danner.com
Dardevle by Eppinger - www.dardevle.com
Ducks Unlimited - www.ducks.org
Egret Baits - www.egretbaits.com
Falcon Guides - www.falcon.com
Finn Tackle Company - www.finnspoons.com
Flying Fisherman - www.flyingfisherman.com
Gapen Company - www.gapen.com
Hawke Sport Optics - www.hawkeoptics.com
Henry Repeating Arms Co. - www.henryUSA.com
HHA Sports - www.HHASports.com
Hi Mountain Seasonings - www.himtnjerky.com
Hornady Manufacturing - www.hornady.com
Indiana Destination Development Corporation - www.visitindiana.com
Kehrer Fish Company - www.kehrerfishcompany.com
L&S Bait Company - www.shopmirrolure.com
LaCrosse Footwear - www.lacrossefootwear.com
LensPen - www.lenspen.com
Li'L Tuffy Swimbait - www.ramblingangler.com
Mack's Lure - www.mackslure.com
MEC Outdoors - www.mecoutdoors.com
Mepps by Sheldons', Inc - www.mepps.com
Mister Twister - www.mistertwister.com
Mongo Attachments - www.mongoattachments.com
Nat'l Shooting Sports Foundation - www.nssf.org
National Wild Turkey Federation - www.nwtf.org
Nesco Vacuum Sealers - www.nesco.com
Norsemen Outdoors - www.norsemenoutdoors.com
Nosler - www.nosler.com
Nothead Tackle - www.notheadtackle.com
O.F. Mossberg & Sons, Inc. - www.mossberg.com
Old Salt Angling - www.oldsaltangling.com
Otis Technology - www.otistec.com
Outdoor Edge - www.outdooredge.com
Pheasants Forever - www.pheasantsforever.org
Pro-Cure Bait Scents - www.pro-cure.com
Rapala VMC - www.rapala.com
Renfro Productions - www.renfroproductions.com
Seaguar Fishing Lines - www.seaguar.com
Shooter's Choice - www.shooters-choice.com
SKRE Gear - www.skregear.com
Smith's Products - www.smithsproducts.com
Speedhook Specialists - www.speedhook.com
Sporting Classics - www.sportingclassics.com
Spypoint Trail Cameras - www.spypoint.com
St. Croix Rods - www.stcroixrods.com
Sturm, Ruger & Co. - www.ruger.com
Swab-Its - www.swab-its.com
Sweet Owen CVB - www.sweetowencvb.org
Tales End Tackle - www.talesendtackle.com
Target Communications Outdoor Books - www.targetcommbooks.com
Toyota Motor Sales - www.toyotanewsroom.com
Traditions Media - www.traditionsmedia.com
Traveler's Guide to Firearms Laws of 50 States - www.bookvalueusa.com
TTI-Blakemore Fishing - www.ttiblakemore.com
Van Vuuren African Safaris - www.vvasafaris.com
Vexilar, Inc. - www.vexilar.com
Vortex Optics - www.vortexoptics.com
Whitetails Unlimited - www.whitetailsunlimited.com
WildTech - www.wildtechgear.com
Winchester Ammunition - www.winchester.com
W.R. Case - www.wrcase.com
Yakima Bait Company - www.yakimabait.com
Z-Man Fishing - www.zmanfishing.com

HOW members are encouraged to check these websites for general info and answers to product and service questions.

Hoosier Outdoor Writers

Application For New Membership

(Check Desired Classification below)

\$30 _____ Active
\$25 _____ Associate
\$50 _____ Supporting
\$15 _____ Active Student
\$10 _____ Associate Student

Personal Information:

Name: _____
Company (Supporting members only): _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Phone: _____
Email: _____

Professional Information:

Employer (if outdoor-related): _____ Position: _____
Business Address: _____
Business Phone: _____

1. Describe your work in the outdoor field: Full Time _____ Part Time _____

2. Check your field(s) of outdoor work:

_____ Newspapers	_____ Magazine	_____ Radio	_____ Artist
_____ Books	_____ Photography	_____ Lectures	
_____ Television	_____ Teaching	_____ Trade Journals	
_____ Blog/Online Work	_____ Public relations	_____ Government Info - Ed	
_____ Other (Specify): _____			

3. Are you paid for your outdoor work? Yes _____ No _____

4. Your work is published or disseminated: Daily ____; Weekly ____; Monthly ____; ____ times a year

Attach samples or other proof of your work in the outdoor field: newspaper clips, letters from station managers attesting to frequency of radio or TV broadcasts, lecture schedule or publicity clips, photo clips or artistic prints, title of latest book, masthead of trade journal showing your position, etc.

Send completed application and article copies to: **Tom Berg, 2142 Nondorf Street, Dyer, IN 46311.**

I have read the principles and membership requirements of the Hoosier Outdoor Writers and would like to enroll in the classification checked above.

Signature: _____

Sponsor: _____

Who We Are

The Hoosier Outdoor Writers was formed in 1969 and has brought together many diverse groups and individuals with shared interests. The Hoosier Outdoor Writers, known among its members as HOW, is a group of dedicated media professionals who are keenly interested in the wise use of natural resources in the Hoosier State.

What We Do

These are the purposes of HOW:

1. To improve ourselves in the art, skill and effectiveness of our craft, and to increase knowledge and understanding of the whole state.
2. To help ensure the wisest and best conservation of Indiana's resources, and the most wide-spread fair use of Indiana's recreational potential.
3. To provide a vehicle for bringing together and joining in common cause all Hoosiers who by profession, hobby or interest are devoted to the outdoors.
4. Conduct an annual Awards-In-Craft Contest among its members. The award winners are announced each year at HOW's annual conference.

What We Stand For

These are what we strive to accomplish:

1. To give the profession of outdoor writing/reporting greater recognition and understanding, even higher standards and enlarged scope.
2. To encourage and enforce high standards of professional ethics.
3. To strive always for the truth, accuracy, clarity and completeness in the dissemination of outdoor information.
4. To help friends and fight the foes of wisely conserved Indiana resources.

Membership Requirements

Membership is open to anyone who meets one of the following:

1. Active

Members are those regularly engaged in the paid dissemination of outdoor-oriented information via newspapers, radio, television, internet/online, magazines, trade journals, books, photographs, art, lectures, or other fitting media. (Basic guidelines of "regularity" of dissemination are: 20 newspaper articles, photos or broadcasts a year; 20 online



articles, blogs, vlogs or podcasts a year; two national or four regional magazines or specialty journal articles a year, or one book, 10 lectures, or 20 bona fide outdoor news releases a year). The legal advisor for the association shall be an active member without meeting the basic guidelines.

2. Associate

Members are those who have a strong direct interest in the outdoors, either professional or personal, such as conservationists of all kinds; nature lovers; sportsmen; outdoorsmen; public employees in outdoor fields; educators teaching related subjects; fishing guides and tournament anglers, and retail-level dealers in outdoor goods, equipment or facilities.

3. Supporting

Members are those engaged in major commercial efforts directly related to the outdoors, such as manufacturers, distributors, service providers, manufacturers' representatives, or advertising agencies serving any of these.

4. Active Student

Members are those between the ages of 18 and 24 years who are bona fide college students with a major in journalism, communications, or natural resources sciences.

5. Associate Student

Members are those who are students who have an active interest in the outdoors in the areas of fishing, hunting, boating, hiking, nature, ecology, or in preserving the environment in general.

Calendar of Events

POMA 2024 Business Conference:

(www.professionalloutdoormedia.org)

Pinewood, SC

May 6-8, 2024

NRA 2024 Annual Meeting and Exhibits:

(www.nraam.org)

Dallas, TX

May 17-19, 2024

ICAST Show 2024:

(www.ICASTfishing.org)

Orlando, FL

July 16-19, 2024

OWAA 2024 Conference:

(www.owaa.org)

El Paso, TX

September 20-22, 2024

AGLOW 2024 Conference:

(www.aglowinfo.org)

Kentucky Lake, KY

September 23-27, 2024

HOW 2025 Annual Conference:

(www.HoosierOutdoorWriters.org)

Clifty Inn, Clifty Falls State Park

Madison, IN

April 4-6, 2025

(Annual meeting on April 5)

HOW members may submit upcoming events, along with dates, locations and other details to the newsletter editor at: director@hoosieroutdoorwriters.org for possible inclusion in future issues of *The Blade*.