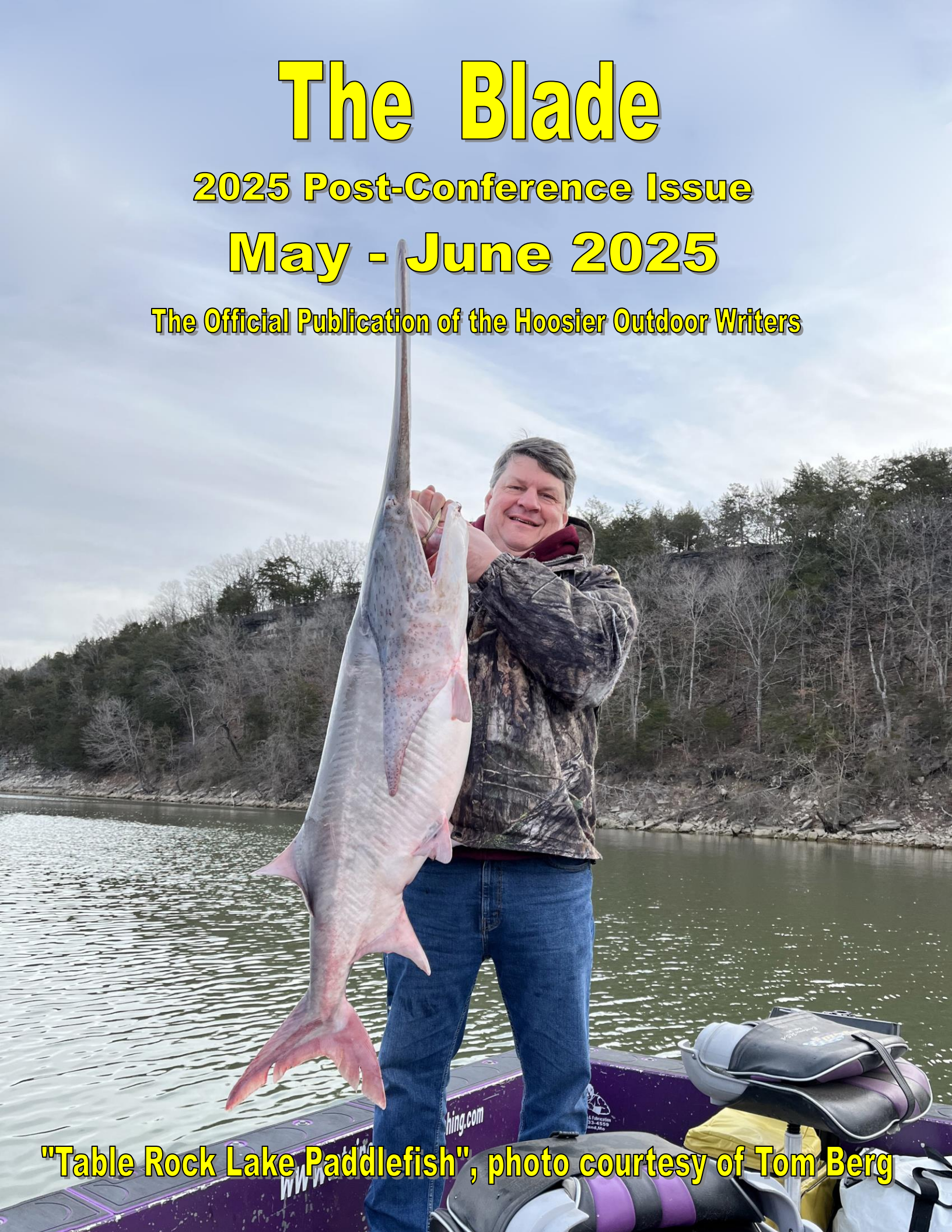


# The Blade

2025 Post-Conference Issue

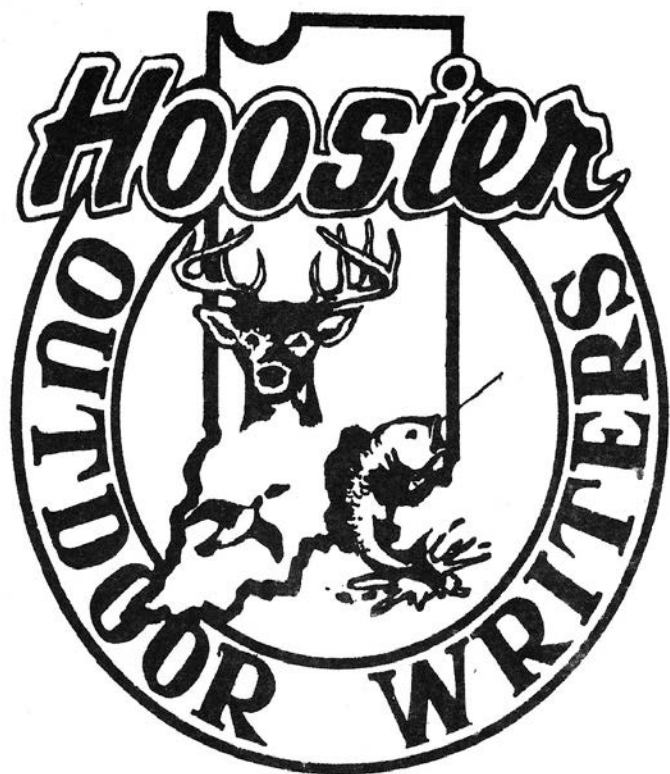
May - June 2025

The Official Publication of the Hoosier Outdoor Writers



"Table Rock Lake Paddlefish", photo courtesy of 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.

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2026  
Region 2 – Doug Allman  
2027  
Region 3 – Gary Redmon  
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Region 4 – Dean Shadley  
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### At Large:

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Don Cranfill – 2026  
Scott Weaver – 2026  
Mike Lunsford – 2027  
Troy McCormick – 2027  
Mike Schoonveld – 2027

All submissions and correspondence in regards to the newsletter should be directed to: Tom Berg (e-mail: [director@hoosieroutdoorwriters.org](mailto:director@hoosieroutdoorwriters.org)), or to Tom Berg, 2142 Nondorf St., Dyer, IN 46311. Portions of this newsletter may be reproduced only with the permission of the Hoosier Outdoor Writer's Executive Board and/or the permission of the original author or authors submitting the material. HOW website: [www.HoosierOutdoorWriters.org](http://www.HoosierOutdoorWriters.org).

**On the cover:** HOW Executive Director Tom Berg struggles to lift a giant American Paddlefish that he caught in March, 2025 from Table Rock Lake near Branson, Missouri. He was fishing with paddlefish expert Bryan Wilson from Stained Water Bowfishing Charters. Photo by Bryan Wilson.

# President's Message

by Marilyn Culler

## Wandering and Exploring Our Beautiful State

May and June are magical months in the Indiana outdoors. The state has so many outdoor opportunities that deciding how and where to spend a day can be a challenge. Spring turkey season, fishing, morel mushroom hunting, the Indy 500 – the race is outdoors – hiking, camping, and trails for everything from tenderloins to pies. Wake up and pick an adventure!

On a recent rainy Saturday, I dropped into a coffee shop before exploring a couple parks on the east side of Terre Haute in west central Indiana. I always have great conversations with strangers. A medical student from Pennsylvania talked about her surprise at falling in love with parks in Indiana. An Air Force officer from Virginia said she looked forward to coming back to Indiana and this little coffee shop.



The afternoon rain began as I left the coffee shop. I was reminded of an old article I recently read by former *Indianapolis Star* outdoors columnist “Bayou Bill” Scifres titled “When the Weather Won’t Let You Hunt, Fish!” His day ended like this: “Still, when the wind chased me off the pond (without a shot), I had some bluegills for the skillet.”

That day didn’t end with bluegills in the skillet for me, but I did spend the rest of the day in the rain. I first headed across the street to Dobbs Park, and then to nearby J.I. Case Wetlands. Exploring new places often includes meeting interesting people, like Floyd and Zach.

Floyd pulled in a nice catfish while we chatted on the fishing platform at Dobbs Park. “Dinner,” he said. “There are turtles in this pond too, but my wife won’t let me catch and eat them anymore. She tells me, ‘Do you know how many years it took for that turtle to grow that big?’ So I just bring home catfish.”

At J.I. Case Wetlands, I crossed paths with Zach, a young man in high school. Zach was out birding in the rain. “I saw a grebe, and a sandpiper over there in the corner,” he said pointing. Sure enough, as I continued my walk, the sandpiper was still foraging at the edge of the water.

People have shared stories and encouraged me since I began exploring Indiana in the early 80s. One of those characters was “Bayou Bill” Scifres, whom I first met at a Hoosier Buffalo Riders meeting at Clifty Falls State Park. Fast forward to today, 40 years later. A friend told her husband, Tom Silvey, that he needed to teach me fly fishing. As Tom and I talked – mostly, I listened and learned – he told me about the guy who taught him to tie flies in the early 90s – none other than Jack Scifres, Bill’s brother. Oh, the circle of life!

I’m still out there, wandering the back roads, trails, rivers and streams of this beautiful state. I still can’t believe my luck at being paid to go out and write and take pictures around Indiana as my first job out of college. With every adventure and every story about Indiana, I fall in love with our state all over again.

Even in the rain, beauty is everywhere. And bluegills and morels were in the skillet another day. I hope to see many of you in a creek or on a trail in Indiana this coming year.

# The Hoosier Outdoor Writers

New Members, Past Presidents and Memorial Section

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

**Joe Martino (Active)**  
**Kokomo, IN**  
**(Returning Member)**

## 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” Duxtater  
    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 “Cork” 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
Bob Sawtelle	2024



# Annual HOW Fun Shoot

## “Wet and Wild”

*by Tom Berg*

The 2025 HOW Fun Shoot held before the conference at Clifty Falls State Park was another fun event. OK, it wasn't terribly wild, but it certainly was very wet! It is a long-standing tradition for the shooters in the HOW membership to get together and break some clay targets on the Friday before the Annual Meeting. We always have fun and we look forward to renewing old friendships. 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!

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

**2025 Fun Shoot  
Sponsor**



For this year's HOW Fun Shoot, a stalwart group of HOW members and guests met at the Atterbury Shooting Complex on the west side of Edinburgh. The event took place on Friday, April 4. It did not snow on us this year, but it certainly did rain! The precipitation kept switching between a light drizzle and a steady rain, and it never quite stopped. We have always made it our policy that we never let the weather cancel this event. We shoot rain or shine – the only exception is if there is lightning – and then we will delay the shoot until the lightning is gone. This year there were no thunderstorms, but we did all get wet!



**Above:** HOW Fun Shoot participants watch the action as the rain comes down. Rich Schoonveld is shooting here, and those watching include Phil Seng, Laura Seng, Mike Schoonveld, Tom Berg, John Schoonveld and Jeff Erdman. **Left:** Boxes of Winchester AA Lite Handicap Target Loads waiting for their turn in the rain. Photos by Marilyn Culler.



The Atterbury Shooting Complex has a nice skeet range, so we shot two full rounds of skeet before heading for Clifty Falls. As usual, Phil Seng's wife Laura was kind enough to keep score for the shooters, even though the rain made it quite a challenge with wet score cards. Even so, the rain was preferable to the cold and snowy conditions we experienced at last year's HOW Fun Shoot in February!

(HOW Fun Shoot continued on next page)

In the first round, Phil Seng showed his usual prowess by chalking up the best score and breaking 19/25 clay birds on the skeet course. In fact, he had a particularly hot streak where he hit 14 clay targets in a row. Excellent shooting! Tom Berg and Jeff Erdman came in second place with a score of 17/25 each, followed by Mike Schoonveld in third place with 14/25.

There was a slight lull in the rain as we finished Round 1, so we decided to get right back on the skeet course to see if we could get in another round before it really started pouring.

Unfortunately for Seng, his hot streak ended after the first round and he struggled in Round 2. He finished with a score of 13/25 and a two-round total of 32. But that was good enough for **Third Place** overall.



Tom Berg and Jeff Erdman were both very consistent in the rain, and in Round 2 they each tallied the same score that they had in Round 1: 17/25. So they both tied for an overall two-round score of 34, garnering them a **Second Place** tie.

Mike Schoonveld must have been using Round 1 as his warm-up round, because he began shooting much better in Round 2. He had one stretch where he hit 12 clay pigeons in a row, and only missed a few other targets here and there. He ended the round with the high score for the day of 21/25. That also put him into **First Place** with a two-round high score of 35. That's what we call a real come-back! Congrats, Mike!

The other shooters racked up slightly lower scores than the top three mentioned above, but they all had a



good time. Next year we are hoping for even better scores, and with any luck, we will have much better weather.

Thanks again to **Winchester Ammunition** for sponsoring the HOW Fun Shoot and supplying the shotshells this year.

**Top (L to R):** Phil Seng and Mike Schoonveld discuss the finer points of hitting clay targets. **Middle:** Tom Berg fires at a target that just left the skeet "high house". **Above:** Six of the shooters at this year's HOW Fun Shoot (L to R): Mike Schoonveld, Phil Seng, Tom Berg, John Schoonveld, Rich Schoonveld and Jeff Erdman. All Fun Shoot photos by Marilyn Culler.





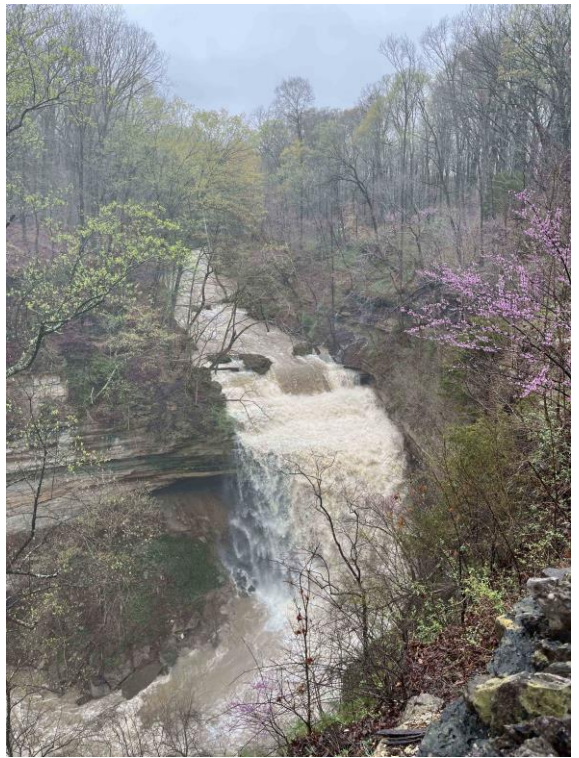
## 2025 HOW Conference Returns to Clifty Falls State Park

The 55th meeting of the Hoosier Outdoor Writers took place on the weekend of April 4-6, 2025 (Friday through Sunday) at Clifty Falls State Park near beautiful Madison, Indiana. Believe it or not, it has been twelve years since we had a conference at Clifty Falls. And just like twelve years ago, it was very rainy and the Ohio River was at flood stage!

As usual, the first activity of the conference was the annual HOW Fun Shoot on Friday, April 4. Several HOW members met at the Atterbury Shooting Complex near Edinburgh for a couple rounds of skeet. If you didn't make it this year, check out pages 5-6 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. Hopefully we will get a nice, warm, sunny day as opposed to the rain we had this year and the snow we had last year!

After the Fun Shoot the shooters joined the other HOW members who were already gathering for the Friday evening barbecue at the **Clifty Shelter House** inside the state park. This shelter is located near the park's largest waterfall on Clifty Creek, and with all of the recent rain that fell the waterfall was really roaring!

The barbecue started at 6:00pm. Special thanks to Executive Tourism Director Andrew Forrester with **Visit Madison** for reserving the shelter for us and for sponsoring this year's barbecue. Visit Madison provided a great barbecue meal for us which was prepared by local caterer **Rub-B-Que**. It was excellent! We all enjoyed



**Top:** The water on Clifty Creek was roaring on Friday evening. **Above:** How members enjoying the BBQ. Tom Berg photos.



(continued from previous page)



smoked brisket, pulled pork and all the sides. We even had fried fish from the Clifty Inn's restaurant for those who wanted the Lenten fish option. The barbecue was the perfect time to meet up with old friends and make some new ones as the food was being served.

Most HOW members also made the short walk from the shelter house to view the roaring waterfall, even though it was sprinkling rain on and off.

Everyone sat down inside the shelter to eat and continue visiting. The food was great and the company was even better. The temperature was pretty chilly, as we have come to expect at our annual BBQ, but everyone had a good time anyway.

### ANNUAL MEETING AT THE CLIFTY INN – SATURDAY, APRIL 5

This year's annual meeting began at 8:00am on Saturday morning, and the attending HOW members and guests assembled in the Overlook Room inside the Clifty Inn. 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.



HOW President Bob Sawtelle 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 15 for a complete list). Afterwards, he introduced Justus O'Neil, the public relations & social media officer from Visit Indiana. O'Neill welcomed the HOW membership and talked briefly about tourism and what is going on in Indiana during 2025.



**Top:** Another BBQ photo. **Above:** President Bob Sawtelle speaks to the HOW membership. **Right:** Justus O'Neil from Visit Indiana talks about Hoosier tourism. Photos by Tom Berg.

Bob Sawtelle then introduced our first seminar speaker of the day: DNR Big Rivers Fisheries Research Biologist **Phil Kacmar**. His presentation was titled "Ohio River Fishery: Past, Present and Future Management".

He talked about the management of species such as catfish, but also sauger and other important fish species to commercial fishermen like paddlefish and buffalo. His data shows that in the past few years, commercial harvest of catfish has been increasing slightly, while buffalo catches have decreased and paddlefish harvest has plummeted. Recreation anglers still make good catches, and they pursue everything from catfish and buffalo to sauger, largemouth and smallmouth bass, white bass and even sunfish and crappies.

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After a short break, Sawtelle introduced the second seminar speaker: DNR Invasive Carp Fisheries Biologist **Craig Jansen**. In his presentation, “Invasive Carp in the Ohio River Basin”, he described the four different species of invasive carp in the Ohio River and what is being done to try to control their numbers. Those species include silver carp, bighead carp, grass carp and black carp.

Jansen discussed the non-native carp in the Ohio River (in Indiana, Kentucky and Illinois), how they got there and the efforts to get them under control. He also talked about other areas where invasive carp are a problem, including

Kentucky Lake and Lake Barkley. There is a lot of work going on right now with the hope of significantly reducing carp numbers by increasing carp harvest and slowing the spread in Indiana.

Of course, Asian carp are famous for jumping out of the water when boats motor past them, and they pose a real risk to recreational boaters. One solution is to incentivize commercial operations to remove large amounts of carp. Jansen displayed data that shows 4.6 million pounds



**At Left:** Biologist Phil Kacmar talks about Ohio River fisheries. **Above:** Craig Jansen discusses invasive carp mitigation strategies. Tom Berg photos.



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

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of Asian carp have been harvested from the Ohio River basin since 2022. That's just the past three years. Other operations have removed 2.5 million pounds of carp from the Wabash River since 2022 as well. The Asian carp problem is an ongoing battle, and our biologists will not stop working on finding solutions.

Before breaking for lunch, President Bob Sawtelle 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. Marilyn Culler was elected our new President, John Maxwell was elected Vice-President and Bob Sawtelle will become the Board Chairman. Our new Board members (terms expiring in 2027) include: Doug Allman, Dean Shadley, Mike Lunsford, Troy McCormick and Mike Schoonveld. Thank you to all of our new volunteers!

After the elections and business meeting were concluded, an excellent buffet lunch was served by the Clifty Inn catering staff. Everyone relaxed and socialized for an hour before the afternoon activities began. 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, newly-elected HOW President Marilyn Culler introduced the next seminar speaker: **Mike Sacopulos**, the owner and publisher of *Bird Watcher's Digest* magazine. Sacopulos



Publisher Mike Sacopulos talks about his nature magazine *Bird Watcher's Digest*.



TIP Board President Phil Seng looks on as Lt. Brent Bohbrink talks about Indiana's TIP program and the help that HOW members can provide by supporting it. Photos on this page by Tom Berg.

talked about the history of the magazine and identified the people that work behind the scenes to make each issue happen. He also discussed what it takes to put together a national nature magazine every two months. He brought samples of the magazine for each conference attendee and all agreed that BWD is a beautiful publication!

After the discussion about Bird Watcher's Digest magazine, it was time to present the awards for the **TIP (Turn-In-a-Poacher/Polluter) Writing 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.

TIP Board President Phil Seng and Lt. Brent Bohbrink from the IDNR Law Enforcement Division discussed the TIP program and the TIP mission, and thanks the HOW membership for participating in this year's TIP writing contest. They stressed the importance of educating the public and enlisting the public's help in the fight against poachers and polluters. They also announced this year's TIP writing contest winners and presented the winners with checks and certificates. Please see page 24 for details of the winners and photos of the TIP awards presentation.



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After the TIP awards were distributed, HOW President Marilyn Culler stated that it was time to announce the results of the **2025 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 17-23 for details and results of the annual HOW AIC contests. Participation by the membership was about the same as last year in the writing categories, but it was a little less in the photography section. We received several entries in the broadcast contests this year, which is much better than our showing last year when we had no broadcast entries. Hopefully we can get even better participation in 2026. After all, you can't win if you don't play!

Our sincere thanks go out to Brian Smith and **Quad 4 Plastics** for sponsoring this year's AIC contests and for recognizing the creative achievements of our members.



HOW Awards-in-Craft winners for 2025 are shown after receiving their awards at the conference, courtesy of Quad 4 Plastics. **From left to right:** Phil Bloom, John Martino, John Maxwell, Brian Stone, Brent Wheat, Mike Schoonveld, Mike Lunsford, Troy McCormick and Tom Berg. Not present: Brent Drinkut and Richard Hines.

The final seminar of the day was titled **“Imperiled Freshwater Mussels in Indiana”** and was led by DNR Nongame Aquatic Biologist Brant Fisher. Fisher discussed the many different species of freshwater mussels living in Indiana and why the populations of many of them are declining.

He explained that mussels are so endangered for a variety of reasons. As might be expected, mussels are very sensitive to water quality issues like pollutants and contaminants, but they are also affected by habitat destruction and alteration caused (mostly) by people. One of the problems from the past was overharvesting from the button and cultured pearl industries. Another big problem has been the introduction of non-native



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mussel and clam species such as the well-known zebra mussels and less familiar basket clams.

Another factor in the decline of mussels is public apathy. Who cares about mussels? Actually, we should all care because mussels are important to the environment. They act as natural filters for our water and they play a big role in nutrient cycling. They also provide a great colonization surface to a variety of invertebrates in our aquatic systems and help stabilize lake and stream bottoms. They are also an important food source for many creatures.

Indiana biologists are currently working on restoration efforts to help our freshwater mussels. Those efforts include relocating adult mussels from areas where they are abundant to other areas where their populations have existed historically but are in decline; propagating mussels with captive rearing techniques; and even infesting host fish species with larval mussels and releasing the fish in specific areas.



DNR Nongame Aquatic Biologist Brant Fisher talks about the state of our native freshwater mussels in Indiana today. Tom Berg photos.

## HOW OUTDOOR WRITERS RAFFLE

Veteran HOW conference attendees know that the final activity of the day is always the annual HOW Raffle. This is the favorite part of the meeting for many of our 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 82** companies, organizations and individuals. This was even better than the 2024 raffle, but we will be trying even harder for next year's 2026 conference. We had a great assortment of raffle items again this year, as usual. Berg would also like to thank John Galambos, Brent Wheat and Marilyn Culler 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.

The moment the raffle tickets went on sale, a 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. Regular raffle tickets were \$2.00 each and tickets for the firearms raffle were \$10.00 each. 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. Thanks also to Terri Trowbridge for helping with ticket sales.

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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 **CVA Optima V2** .50 caliber muzzleloader combo, complete with a **Konus Pro** scope and a **CVA** soft rifle case; an excellent **Mossberg Patriot 350 Legend** rifle with a fluted barrel, drop box magazine and a walnut stock; and a great **Ruger American Rifle Generation II** (caliber: 7mm-08 Rem). We even had a **Red Ryder Air Rifle** from **Daisy Outdoor Products**!



There was also a **Boat US** membership, premium sunglasses, high-end **Alps** backpacks, fishing rods and reels, fishing tackle, fishing lures, fishing line, premium rodholders, fishing scents, terminal tackle,

**Photo Above Left:** Mike Berg (left) and Scott Weaver (center) purchase their raffle tickets from Brent Wheat (right). **Photo Above Right:** Brent Wheat was in charge of HOW raffle sales again and he did an excellent job! Thanks, Brent! Photos on this page by Tom Berg.



tackle boxes, shooting and hunting gear, a Spypoint trail camera, an MEC reloading press, binoculars and other optics, a premium HHA bow sight, books, electronics, knives, ammunition, gun cleaning products, a Hornady gun safe, waterfowl decoys, fishing rod holders, trolling gear, boots, archery gear, camping gear and much more. We also had many gift certificates for products and services from our generous Supporting Members.

The 2025 HOW 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 16. 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!

## **Sunday Fishing Outing on the Ohio River Cancelled Due to Flooding and High Water**

We were planning on having a fishing outing on Sunday, April 6 for any conference attendees who wanted to stay an extra day and do some fishing for catfish on the Ohio River. Unfortunately, our plans were thwarted by major flooding on the Ohio River (and the surrounding countryside).

As can be seen in the photo below, the Ohio River was over its banks and covering shoreline park lands in downtown Madison. We saw large logs and even whole trees floating down the river on Sunday morning!



Our thanks still go out to the **Indiana Catfish Association** (ICA) for agreeing to provide the boats and volunteer boat captains to take us fishing, even though the weather had other plans. We will try to plan a “make-up” outing sometime in the near future.



# 2025 HOW Conference

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



# HOW Raffle Donors - 2025

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

Alps Brands  
Archery Trade Association  
B'n'M Poles  
Black River Tools  
BoatUS  
BOLT Locks  
BPI Outdoors  
Brother Nature Fishing Adventures  
BrushPile Fishing  
Cauldryn  
Church Tackle  
Cocoons Eyewear  
Costa  
Daisy Outdoor Products  
Dardevle Lures  
Egret Baits  
Falcon Guides  
Finn Tackle Company  
FINS Braid  
Fiocchi Ammunition  
Flying Fisherman  
G Pucci & Sons  
The Gapen Company  
Gator Bait Tackle  
Gill Fishing  
Grundens USA  
Habit Apparel  
Hawke Sport Optics  
HHA Sports  
Hi-Mountain Seasonings  
Hobie Eyewear  
HoldFastPro Phone Holders  
Hornady Manufacturing  
Kehrer Fish Company  
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Li'L Tuffy Swimbaits  
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Quad 4 Plastics  
Rapala VMC  
RCBS  
Riton Optics  
Roberts Camera  
Seaguar Fishing  
Shooter's Choice  
Sierra Bullets  
Snag Proof Lures  
Speedhook Specialists  
Sporting Classics  
Spypoint Trail Cameras  
St. Croix Rods  
Sturm, Ruger & Co.  
Swab-Its  
Target Communications Outdoor Books  
Toyota North America  
Traveler's Guide to the Firearm Laws  
TTI-Blakemore  
Vicious Fishing  
Vortex Optics  
Whitetails Unlimited  
Winchester Ammunition  
W.R. Case



## The HOW 2025 Awards-In-Craft Contests

The results are in! The winners of the 2025 Awards-In-Craft contest were announced at this year's annual conference at Clifty Falls State Park in April, and we had many outstanding entries. As usual, the writing portion of the contest drew the most interest, as HOW members submitted a total of 65 entries from 11 different HOW members. This was almost the same number of entries from 2024 when we had 66 entries, but it's still pretty good. Let's see if we can do better next year and have even more entries in 2026! You can't win if you don't play, and there is no cost to participate. The photography contest participation was down a bit from last year, as this year we had 27 entries from six HOW members. Last year we had 33 photo entries from eight HOW members. I know we can do better, since three years ago we had 49 photo entries from 11 members! The Broadcast contest garnered some interest this year as we had a total of six entries – which is better than last year when there were no entries! Next year our radio broadcasters, podcasters, TV and video professionals need to submit more 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 eleven different winners in the contests in 2025, and each took home prize money. Make sure you get in on the fun next year!

This year the Awards-In-Craft contests were sponsored by **Quad 4 Plastics**, so the winners were awarded checks along with certificates to commemorate their big achievements. We would like to thank Brian Smith, Director of Sales and Marketing at **Quad 4 Plastics** in Elkhart, Indiana for their very generous sponsorship in 2025.



All HOW members are encouraged to go visit the Quad 4 Plastics website ([www.quad4plastics.com](http://www.quad4plastics.com)) to find out more about their precision injection molding and their thermoforming and vacuum forming capabilities. If it is made of plastic, Quad 4 Plastics can make it!

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 Clifty Falls. 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 2025 Awards-In-Craft coordinators were: **Dave Hoffman** (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**

(2025: 65 entries from 11 different HOW members)

(2024: 66 entries from 12 different HOW members)

(2023: 78 entries from 14 different HOW members)



### **Hunting/Trapping (Less Than 1000 Words)**

1st: Brent Wheat, "To Deer or Not to Deer"

2nd: John Martino, "Who is the Real King of the Woods?"

3rd: Tom Berg, "Remembering Fred Bear and Early Bowhunting"

### **Hunting/Trapping (More Than 1000 Words)**

1st: Brian Stone, "A Veteran's Day Woodcock Hunt"

2nd: Mike Schoonveld, "Doubling Your Fun on the Line" - TIE -

2nd: John Martino, "Sometimes the Line Can Get Blurry" - TIE -

3rd: John Martino, "Roadtrip to America's Last Frontier" - TIE -

3rd: Mike Schoonveld, "Catching a Fox in Coyote Country" - TIE -

### **Fishing (Less Than 1000 Words)**

1st: Tom Berg, "It's Bluegill Spawning Time!"

2nd: Tom Berg, "Thoughts for Late-Season River Catfish"

3rd: Richard Hines, "Fishing Around Docks Requires Etiquette"

### **Fishing (More Than 1000 Words)**

1st: Tom Berg, "Great Lakes Spring Smallmouth Action"

2nd: Phil Bloom, "Fishing, Up Close" - TIE -

2nd: Mike Schoonveld, "Adapt and Adjust Lure Colors for Success" - TIE -

3rd: Mike Schoonveld, "Fishing in a Really Special Place"

### **Conservation (Less Than 1000 Words)**

1st: John Martino, "Hunting Wildlife is Part of Conserving Them"

2nd: Mike Schoonveld, "Who Funds Fisheries Programs?"

3rd: John Martino, "Conservation Story Something to Gobble About"

### **Conservation (More Than 1000 Words)**

1st: Phil Bloom, "Natural Wonders Aplenty"

2nd: Mike Lunsford, "The Bird That Stayed Out in the Cold"

3rd: Richard Hines, "American Chestnut"

### **General Outdoors (Less Than 1000 Words)**

1st: Brent Wheat, "Outdoor Men Can Cook"

2nd: Tom Berg, "Appreciating the American Coot"

3rd: Brent Wheat, "Outdoor Cooking Isn't for the Faint of Heart"

### **General Outdoors (More Than 1000 Words)**

1st: John Martino, "Holidays Should Be a Time of Remembrance" - TIE -

1st: Brent Wheat, "Hoarding" - TIE -

2nd: Richard Hines, "A Sharp History"

3rd: Mike Lunsford, "Summertime and the Livin' Isn't Always Easy"



## **HOW PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST**

(2025: 27 entries from 6 different HOW members)

(2024: 33 entries from 8 different HOW members)

(2023: 22 entries from 4 different HOW members)

### **Hunting/Trapping**

1st: Tom Berg, "Hunting Farmland Pheasant"

2nd: John Maxwell, "Pepper's First Retrieve"

3rd: John Maxwell, "Father and Daughter Turkey Hunt"

### **Fishing**

1st: John Maxwell, "Up-Close Crappie Fishing"

2nd: John Maxwell, "Dogwood Lake Bluegill Evening"

3rd: Tom Berg, "Girls Love Bluegills"

### **Outdoor Scenic**

1st: John Maxwell, "Aurora Borealis Over Dunes State Park Beach"

2nd: John Maxwell, "Bald Cypress and Sunset at Hovey Lake"

3rd: Mike Lunsford, "Henbit Barn"

### **Outdoor Recreation**

1st: Mike Lunsford, "On the Lake"

2nd: John Maxwell, "Foggy Morning Wildlife Photography"

3rd: Brent Drinkut, "Knobstone Hike"



## **BROADCAST**

(2025: 6 entries from 2 different HOW members)

(2024: No entries)

(2023: 7 entries from 2 different HOW members)

### **Best Radio Broadcast**

1st: Brent Wheat, "GunsMagazine.com – Pro Secret: I Hate Carrying a Gun"

2nd: Brent Wheat, "GunsMagazine.com – Perfect Plinking Pistols"

3rd: -- No Entry --

### **Best TV Broadcast**

1st: Troy McCormick, "America's First Train Robbers"

2nd: Troy McCormick, "BrushPile Fishing: Muskegon Lake, Michigan"

3rd: -- No Entry --

### **Best Video**

1st: Troy McCormick, "Martin County, Indiana Rocks!"

2nd: Troy McCormick, "Russ Bailey on Dock Shooting"

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



*"Hunting Farmland Pheasant"*

**First Place** - Tom Berg



*"Pepper's First Retrieve"*

**Second Place** - John Maxwell



*"Father and Daughter Turkey Hunt"*

**Third Place** - John Maxwell



## WINNING IMAGES FROM THIS YEAR

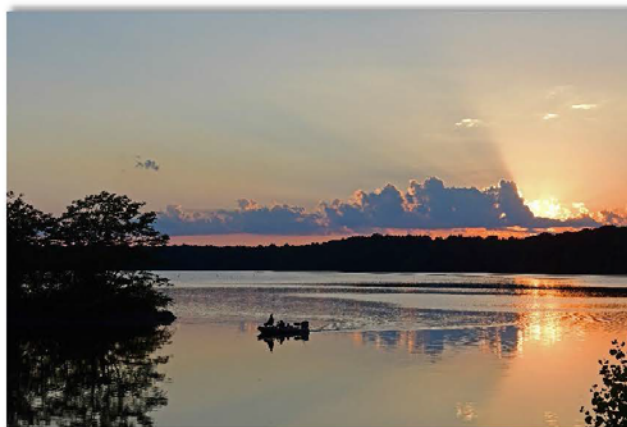
### Fishing



"Up-Close Crappie Fishing"

**First Place** - John Maxwell

**Second Place** - John Maxwell



"Dogwood Lake Bluegill Evening"



"Girls Love Bluegills"

**Third Place** — Tom Berg

## WINNING IMAGES FROM THIS YEAR

### Outdoor Scenic

First Place — John Maxwell



"Aurora Borealis over Dunes State Park Beach & Pavilion"



"Bald cypress & Sunset at Hovey Lake"

Second Place — John Maxwell

Third Place — Mike Lunsford



"Henbit Barn"



## WINNING IMAGES FROM THIS YEAR

### Outdoor Recreation

**First Place** – Mike Lunsford



*"On the Lake"*



*"Foggy Morning Wildlife Photography"*

**Second Place** - John Maxwell

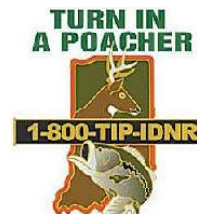


*"Knobstone Hike"*

**Third Place** - Brent Drinkut



## 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. The contest will be running again this year, so start writing those TIP stories right away. There is no limit to the number of entries a person can write and submit.

A complete list of the 2025 winners is printed below, along with info on their winning articles. 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 2025 TIP Contest award winners:

- First Place:** Tom Berg, for his article: **“Indiana’s TIP Program Saves Wildlife”**  
Published in *Midwest Outdoors Magazine*, January, 2024
- Second Place:** Mike Lunsford, for his article: **“We Can’t Protect Them on Our Own”**  
Published in the *Terre Haute Tribune-Star*, December 3, 2024
- Third Place:** Mike Schoonveld, for his article: **“If You See Something, Call the TIP Line”**  
Published in *Midwest Outdoors Magazine*, July/August, 2024

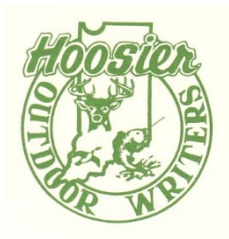


A special thank-you goes to TIP Board president and TIP contest coordinator, Phil Seng. Phil donated his time and energy to gather the entries, forward them on to the TIP Board, and coordinate between HOW and the TIP Board for this contest.

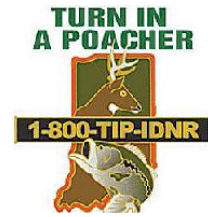
TIP Contest presentations: **Above Left:** Tom Berg receives his 1st Place award from Lt. Brent Bohbrink (L). **Above Right:** Mike Lunsford receives his 2nd Place award from officer Bohbrink. **Right:** 3rd Place winner Mike Schoonveld receives his award as well.







## Hoosier Outdoor Writers Turn in a Poacher/Polluter Writing Contest Official 2025 Contest Guidelines



Once again, the Indiana Turn in a Poacher (TIP) Citizen's Advisory Board is sponsoring a writing contest to encourage HOW members to promote the TIP mission and the hotline. This year prizes are again **\$500 for first place; \$300 for second place; \$200 for third place.** Be sure to write your TIP article right away!

Requirements are simple and entering is easy! Article must be at least 400 words in length and must include:

1. Brief description of TIP (see below—does not have to be verbatim)
2. TIP Hotline (1-800-TIP-IDNR)

Although it is not required, preference will be given to stories that:

- Feature a compelling story that demonstrates how TIP can help conserve or protect fish and wildlife for the people of Indiana.
- Are published in paid publications.

To enter, submit an electronic copy of an article published between **January 1, 2025** and **December 31, 2025**. The TIP Citizen's Advisory Board will review all entries and will select the entries that best promote the mission of TIP and encourage citizens to get involved.

**Entries should be marked as "TIP" entries and sent to Contest Coordinator Phil Seng ([phil@djcase.com](mailto:phil@djcase.com)). They must be emailed by March 1, 2026.**

### What is TIP?

Turn in a Poacher and Polluter, Inc. (TIP) is a non-profit conservation organization that works hand-in-hand with Indiana DNR Law Enforcement to protect our fish and wildlife resources by increasing public support and involvement in bringing violators to justice.

A poacher is a thief who illegally steals wildlife that belongs to each Indiana citizen. Poachers rob licensed, ethical hunters and anglers from recreational opportunities they bought through license fees. Pollution kills Indiana's valuable fish and wildlife resources and harms habitat.

Citizens can help stop poachers and polluters in two ways. If you see, hear or learn about a poacher or pollution that results in the death of fish and wildlife, or any other fish and wildlife violation:

- Call 1-800-TIP-IDNR
- Submit a TIP online at [www.tip.IN.gov](http://www.tip.IN.gov)

If your TIP leads to an arrest, you may receive as much as a \$500 reward, and you can remain anonymous. More information is available at <https://www.in.gov/dnr/lawenfor/2745.htm>



## 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 here 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 Mike Lunsford:

Although he spends considerable time in the woods in hope of photographing interesting birds, HOW member Mike Lunsford says a **Pine Warbler** (*Setophaga pinus*) visited him in mid-April, drinking from a watering bowl he keeps on his cabin railing.

True to their name, pine warblers are usually found in eastern pine forests and spend less time in Indiana since they migrate through the state but breed elsewhere. They actually have limited migrations, spending their winters in the southern states and breeding in the states to the north and east of us.

"I know pine warblers will eat seeds, but they have to be small, and that's the reason he apparently came to the suet feeder and watering bowl I have near my cabin," Lunsford said. Although he has planted numerous white and red pines on his property, and these warblers use their narrow beaks to extract pine seeds as part of their primary diets, he thinks this bird was just "passing through."

"Pine warblers are hard to see, even in pine trees, because they tend to stay high in the tree crown. I just felt very fortunate that this one took the opportunity to get a drink just a few feet away from where I was sitting," Lunsford said.

On the same day, Lunsford also spotted a Northern Parula, yet another warbler, but one that often breeds in central and southern Indiana.



**HOW members** are encouraged to send their interesting bird photos to newsletter editor and bird enthusiast Tom Berg via email ([thomas.berg@comcast.net](mailto: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 cool bird pictures.

**Did you take a cool bird photo while exploring afield recently? Did you see the bird in your back yard? While traveling far from home? Send the photo in for others to enjoy!**



# The Quest for Giant Paddlefish!

Story by Tom Berg

Lots of anglers have a Bucket List for fish they would like to catch. For some people it's a sailfish or marlin. For others it's a trophy-sized salmon or maybe one of the big shark species out in the Gulf. I've had quite a few fish on my own personal Bucket List over the years, and one that has been on the list for a long time is the American paddlefish. I made a trip earlier this spring to Branson, Missouri in the hopes of checking paddlefish off of my list.

My paddlefish guide was Bryan Wilson from Stained Water Bowfishing Charters, and I met him at 6:45am at one of the boat ramps on Table Rock Lake. This lake is actually a massive reservoir, covering 40,000 surface acres and providing almost limitless opportunities for outdoor adventures. As Bryan launched the boat with the help of his first mate, Darren, I got my camera case and other gear out of my car. I was ready to do battle with a giant paddlefish!

Bryan knew exactly where to start in our search for a paddlefish. He motored out to the center of the channel and started watching the sonar screen for signs of fish. Darren was in the back of the boat, preparing to set the trolling rods. The water was just over 20 feet deep where we started, but it was gradually getting deeper as we motored forward.

When trolling for paddlefish, Bryan usually deploys four heavy-duty rods, with each one pulling a diving disk – just like the Dipsy Diver disks we use on Lake Michigan when trolling for salmon. The difference here is there is no lure trailing behind the disk. Instead, a pair of large treble hooks are attached to the line in front of the diving disk.



The author battles the first paddlefish of the day, trying to dredge it up from the depths. Photo by Bryan Wilson.

Unlike salmon, paddlefish are filter feeders and their diet consists almost entirely of zooplankton. Although they occasionally eat tiny aquatic insects, their zooplankton diet makes it extremely unlikely that they will be caught by anglers using conventional fishing lures. Thus, Missouri fishing regulations allow snagging of paddlefish during the annual paddlefish season. The season runs from March 15 through April 30 for most waterways.

Darren began letting the line out on each of the four rods, watching the line counters on each reel as he did so. Bryan told him to start with the divers set about 80 feet back, hoping they would be running deep enough to reach any paddlefish swimming near the bottom. As the depth slowly increased, Darren let out more line to get the rigs deeper. He dropped them to 100 feet, and then to 120 feet back.

We trolled the deep water along a long bluff, and when I glanced at the sonar screen I could see that the water there was 40 feet deep. Bryan pointed out several large marks on the graph that he said were likely paddlefish. But no hookups yet! At the end of the bluff, Bryan turned the boat around and headed back to where he had marked the most fish. Darren dropped the diver disks to 130 feet back to get them even closer to the bottom.

We had not gone far when one of the rods suddenly buckled under the weight of a big fish. Fish on! Bryan slowed the boat and I grabbed the rod. All I could do was hold on tight as the fish surged away. Darren began clearing the other three rods to make sure my fish did not get tangled with them during the fight.

After its initial run, I slowly started gaining line on the big fish. Luckily, Bryan's heavy tackle was well-suited to battling big paddlefish and I soon had the upper hand. I felt the fish tiring and then saw it come to the surface about 30 yards behind the boat. Wow! It was a really big fish! I kept cranking and soon had it right behind the boat.

I could see its long paddle, or rostrum, protruding out from its head, making it look weird and almost alien. Its powerful tail was still propelling it away from the boat, however, and I had to maneuver it back to the side of the boat so Bryan could slip his gaff into its mouth. With one swift move, Bryan hoisted it aboard. Success! We had only been fishing for about 30 minutes and already had a trophy-sized paddlefish in the boat!

(continued on the next page)

I was very happy. When Bryan put it on his certified scale later, it weighed a very respectable 54.5 pounds. Awesome! But the day was still early, so we put that fish in the livewell and started resetting the lines to see if we could catch another paddlefish. The Missouri bag limit on paddlefish is two fish per day, with a minimum size of 34 inches (measured from the eye to the fork of the tail).

After the four lines were reset, Bryan turned the boat and we headed back through the area where we had seen the most fish on the graph. Less than 30 minutes after boating the first fish, one of the rods jumped to life once again. Fish on! Fish on!! I jumped up again and wrestled the rod out of its holder. Another strong fish took off and I started reeling.

This fish did not feel as large as the first one, and it soon surfaced behind the boat. We could see that it was a smaller male paddlefish, although it was still a very big fish. I fought it up to the side of the boat and Bryan carefully lifted it aboard (photo below). He knew it might not meet the minimum size for harvesting it. We measured it and it was just short of the legal size limit, so we prepared to release it. Luckily, it was only lightly hooked in the tail, so we were certain it could be released safely and survive. With a splash of its tail it was gone!

The morning was still young (only 8:10am), so we reset the lines and started trolling again. We continued marking plenty of fish near the bottom, and only 20 minutes later we hooked yet another paddlefish! This one took off like a freight train, and it was difficult for me to get the rod out of the rod holder under the pressure of the fish! Fish on!



**Above:** Berg's first American paddlefish, and a real dandy! It was heavy to hold up, too! Photo by Bryan Wilson. **Below Left:** First mate Darren Orr lifts the small male paddlefish that Berg caught and it was quickly released after a photo. Photo by Tom Berg.



I managed to get control of the rod, and the battle was on. We could tell it was another big paddlefish, and this one fought harder than either of the previous two fish. After a few strong runs, though, it felt like it was beginning to tire. It was a real tug-of-war, but I was winning the battle. Soon the fish came up, wallowing on the surface as I continued gaining line. Bryan prepared the gaff and quickly slipped it under its lower lip and pulled it into the boat.

Another giant paddlefish! This one was almost the same size as the first one, and it completed my two fish limit. As Bryan removed the hook, he exclaimed that this fish was tagged, too! The Missouri Department of Conservation tags certain paddlefish to learn more about the species and improve paddlefish management. I would make sure that I called the phone number on the tag when I got home to report the details on my tagged fish.

It was a very memorable fishing trip. When we got back to the boat ramp, Bryan weighed my second paddlefish and the scale read 50 pounds. It was only slightly smaller than my first fish. Bryan filleted both paddlefish for me and I packed the boneless fillets in a large cooler. I would have plenty of fish for grilling, frying and even smoking!

(continued on the next page)



If this type of trip sounds like fun to you, plan a trip next spring with Bryan Wilson and Stained Water Bowfishing (573-263-8016). But don't let the name of his business fool you. He certainly runs bowfishing charters, but he is an expert

when it comes to spring paddlefish snagging trips. He also runs gigging trips for suckers and other fish during the fall and winter gigging season. Give him a call or go online and check out his cool website at [www.stainedwaterbowfishingcharters.com](http://www.stainedwaterbowfishingcharters.com). He is a real professional, and that's important.

There are lots of great lodging options in Branson, and I stayed at The Village at Indian Point while I was in town ([www.thevillageatindianpoint.com](http://www.thevillageatindianpoint.com)). My condo was a beautiful two bedroom, two bathroom unit and it was the perfect base of operations for me as I fished Table Rock Lake. It was also just a short drive to downtown Branson for restaurants and attractions.

When you plan your trip to the Branson area, be sure to visit the Branson tourism website for some great ideas on what to do during your stay – besides fishing, of course! Here it is: [www.ExploreBranson.com](http://www.ExploreBranson.com).

For the non-fishermen in the family, Branson has an abundance of live music shows, restaurants, outdoor adventures and many other attractions. Make sure you check it out for yourself!

**Left:** Another big Table Rock Lake paddlefish caught by Berg! What a day! This one even had a Missouri DNR reward tag clamped to its lower lip, similar to a duck leg band. Photo by Bryan Wilson.  
**Below:** Measuring more than 60" in total length, paddlefish are indeed very large! They also yielded lots of boneless fillets. Photo by Tom Berg.



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

**For immediate release:** June 4, 2025

## Forestry Symposium is December 9, 10, 2025

The Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Community & Urban Forestry (CUF) program, in partnership with the Indiana Community Forestry Council, is hosting the 2025 Indiana Community & Urban Forestry Symposium on December 9 and 10 at Switchyard Pavilion, located at 1601 S. Rogers St. in Bloomington.

This symposium is for anyone interested in urban forestry in Indiana. Tree board members, municipal staff, nonprofits, university faculty staff and students, arborists, utility representatives, and passionate volunteers are welcome to attend.

Registration instructions and an updated agenda will be released this summer. For more information contact Racheal Stenger at [rstenger@dnr.IN.gov](mailto:rstenger@dnr.IN.gov) or call 317-234-6741.

To view more DNR news releases, please see [dnr.IN.gov](https://dnr.IN.gov).

**Media contact:** Racheal Stenger, Division of Forestry, 317-234-6741, [rstenger@dnr.IN.gov](mailto:rstenger@dnr.IN.gov).





# HOW Member News

## Wabash Valley Audubon Society Honors Phil Cox

Long-time Hoosier Outdoor Writers member, Phil Cox, was recently honored by the Wabash Valley Audubon Society (WVAS) with the James Mason Service Award. Cox, currently the WVAS treasurer, has held virtually every elective office in the organization and has volunteered countless hours toward its promotion and operation.

The James Mason Award is presented at the annual banquet dinner each spring to an individual or group that has "...demonstrated a commitment to bird conservation and/or environmental education in Indiana, particularly in the Wabash Valley." James Mason, a professor of English at Indiana State University, was not only a founding father of the WVAS, but was a leading advocate for birds as president of the Indiana Audubon Society. He passed away in 1989. The Mason Award has been given annually since 1990.

Cox, 65, is the Agriculture and Natural Resources Educator in Vermillion County. Married and living in Parke County, he is extremely active in many civic and environmental organizations, including the Ouabache Land Conservancy and the Vermillion Trails Alliance.



HOW member Phil Cox (right) accepts the Wabash Valley Audubon Society's James Mason Service Award from fellow HOW member and Mason Award winner (2021), Mike Lunsford at the annual WVAS banquet at the Vigo County History Center on April 16. Photo courtesy of Mike Lunsford.

## Tom Berg Wins Fish-of-the-Year Honors

HOW Executive Director Tom Berg recently received several certificates and patches from the Indiana Division of Fish & Wildlife for the **2024 Fish of the Year** contest. Every year the state recognizes the largest fish of each species that are submitted (not counting state record fish).



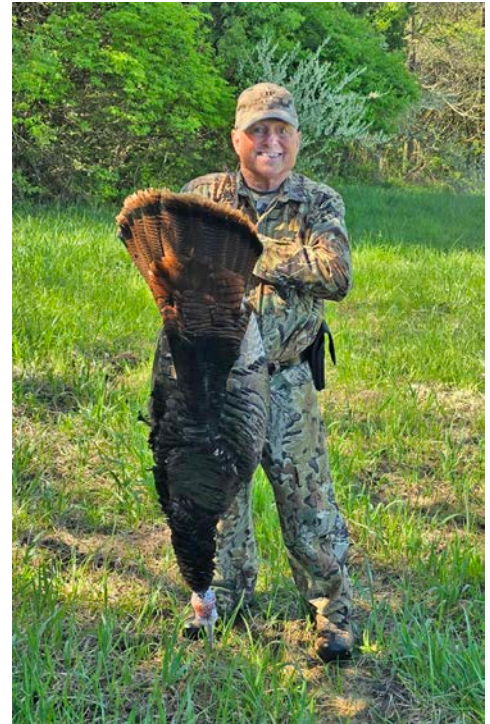
Berg actually won Fish of the Year honors for nine (9) different species that he caught in 2024. Two of his largest submitted fish included a silver carp (28.5 inches long) caught from the Wabash River and a coho salmon (25 inches long) caught from Lake Michigan.

Some of his other interesting winning catches included a black redbhorse, black bullhead, common shiner, green sunfish, hornyhead chub and white perch.

## HOW Members Harvest Turkeys During Indiana's Spring Turkey Season

HOW legal advisor Bill Keaton harvested his 2025 turkey on opening morning of the turkey hunting season. At 7:15am this 25 pound tom turkey (shown at right) walked out in front of Keaton and that was the last thing it did. Keaton reported that the turkey had an 11½ inch beard and 1¼ inch spurs. It was a fine bird!

HOW board member Rick Bramwell and his good friend Ray Novac often hunt turkeys together and this spring was no different. On opening morning they were hunting a property in Owen County and called in a beautiful tom turkey within 29 yards which Bramwell harvested. The time was 7:55am.



As they prepared to take a few photos of the successful hunter and his bird, they suddenly heard a multitude of gobbles from no more than 60 yards into the woods. They quickly retreated to their turkey blind and waited. They didn't have to wait very long, either. After only three minutes, three more toms appeared.

The turkeys saw Bramwell's decoys and passed within 15 yards of the blind. The lead gobbler was the largest, and Novac took him with his .410 turkey gun. It was 8:13am and their turkey hunt was over!

**Above Right:** Bill Keaton smiles over his turkey. **Above Left (L to R):** Ray Novac and Rick Bramwell with their birds.

## Lunsford is Named Readers' Choice Winner, Again

HOW board member Mike Lunsford has been named the "Terre Haute Tribune-Star's" Readers' Choice "Best Columnist" for 2025. It is the fifth time Lunsford has been honored with the award since its inception in 2011.

Named a finalist in voting throughout the Wabash Valley in February, Lunsford took top honors over seven other writers from area newspapers and magazines. His "Off Season" column has led to the publishing of seven books with Shade Tree Press; Lunsford also regularly contributes photographs and features to the "Tribune-Star" and "Terre Haute Living" magazine. Congrats, Mike!





## Keaton and His Gordon Setter

### Enjoy Seeing and Pointing at Woodcock

HOW legal advisor Bill Keaton had an interesting encounter on his property earlier this spring. Here's what he had to say. "On March 31, 2025, I was working outside in front of my barn," he said. "Adjoining the barn is a large grass field. Over the past ten days I had flushed a woodcock out of the field several times which surprised me. I just assumed that it was hunting and finding some worms since that is primarily what they eat."

"On that day in March I went out into the edge of the field where I keep a couple of trailers parked. I needed to measure one to see if it was big enough to carry something I was going to purchase at the lumber yard. When I went out to the edge of the field, my one-year-old Gordon setter, Zeke, followed me and began hunting in the field – which is common for him. When I looked up from my measuring job, Zeke was locked up solidly on a beautiful point. I stopped what I was doing and approached his point."



"As I slowly walked in behind him, I began searching the ground in front of him to see if I could find what he was pointing. I looked slowly and carefully as I very cautiously walked past his point which he continued to hold. About five yards in front

of Zeke I saw a woodcock riveted to the ground. I was able to take some pictures of the bird where it sat."

"I didn't know it at the time, but she was anchored to a nest. I got very close to the woodcock before I finally flushed her. She flew to the edge of the woods nearby and set down. As I looked closely where she had been, I spotted the nest with two eggs in it. I did not want to be too much of a disturbance, so I immediately got Zeke



away and left the area. I strongly hope that she will come back and hatch her eggs, and I won't bother her again."

**Top:** Bill Keaton's dog Zeke stopped to point at a bird hiding in the grass. **Above:** A perfectly camouflaged woodcock sits on her nest. **Left:** Two woodcock eggs were in the nest. Photos by Bill Keaton.

## **“Guess the HOW Member” Earns Two Correct Guesses**

In the last issue we printed the photo at right and challenged HOW members to guess which current member is shown here wearing the nice jacket and bow tie, standing next to his sister.

To add a little excitement, we offered a prize to the first person that could correctly identify the young boy. The prize would be to have their HOW membership dues pre-paid next year.

The morning after that last newsletter was sent out, Mike Schoonveld guessed that the boy in question was Jack Spaulding. He was right! Congrats, Mike! Your HOW dues next year will be comped.

Schoonveld is an early riser, so he sent in his guess at 4:40am that morning. At 5:24am Brian Smith also guessed “Jack Spaulding”. Smith was also correct, but Schoonveld beat him to the prize. But great guess, Brian!

When asked how our correct guessers knew it was Jack Spaulding, Schoonveld said “It just looked like Jack. No other explanation.” Brian Smith was a little more scientific. He said “It was the ears!”



## **After an Extended Hospital Stay, Executive Director Berg is on the Mend**

A few HOW members heard that Executive Director Tom Berg was recently in the hospital, battling an extremely serious case of pneumonia. And to add injury to insult, the pneumonia also triggered AFib (atrial fibrillation) in his heart. When he arrived at the emergency room, his heart rate was near 200 and his blood pressure was only 70/40. Because of the pneumonia, he was having a hard time breathing, too.

The pneumonia was so bad, in fact, that he had to have lung surgery a few days after the doctors stabilized him. The doctors also wanted to shock his heart to get it back into the correct rhythm, but they decided they needed to wait until after the lung surgery. Happily, after the lung surgery the AFib automatically corrected itself and his heart rhythm went back to normal.

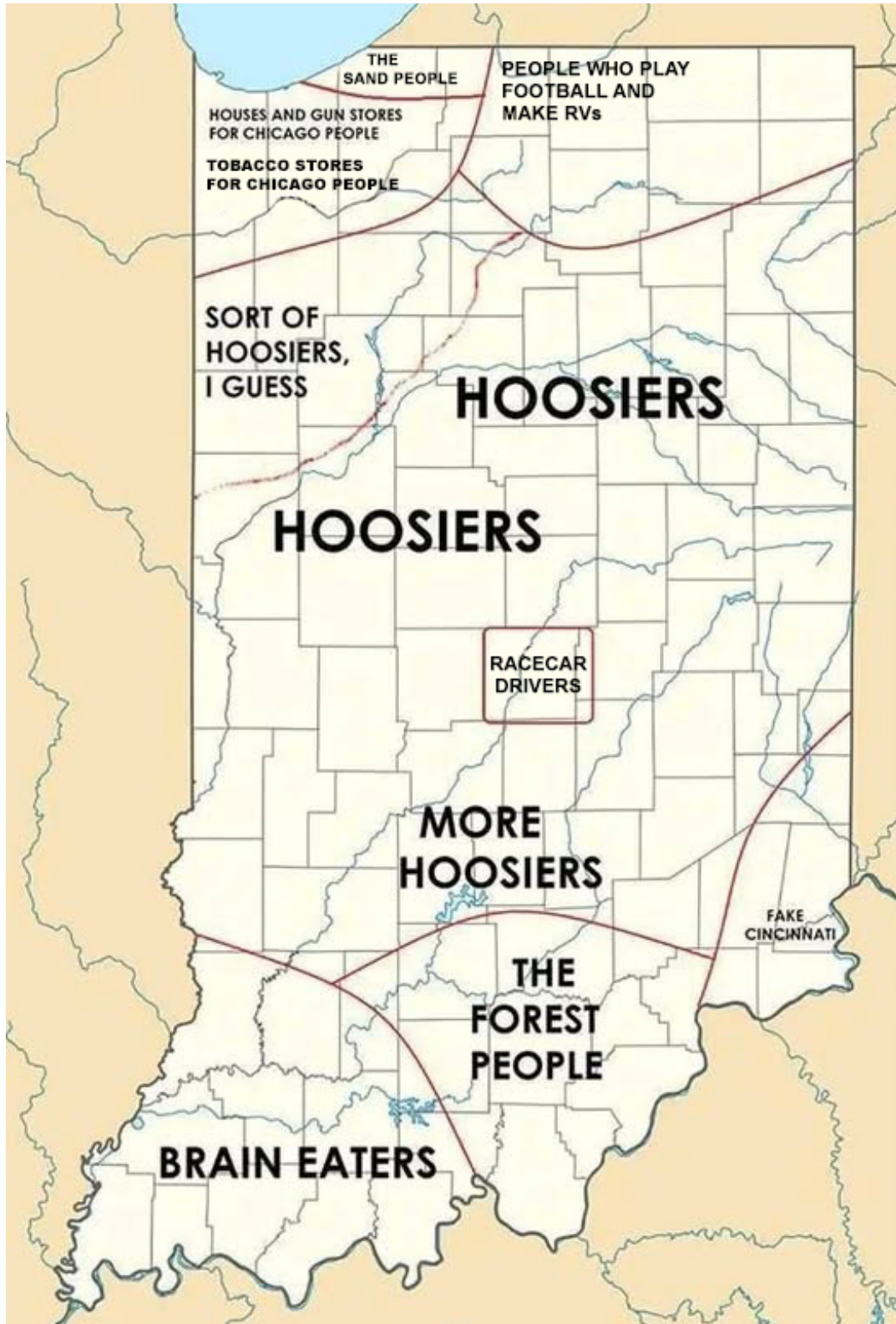
That was in mid-May. The lung surgery required a longer hospital stay than expected, and Berg was actually in the hospital for a total of 11 days. One of Berg’s nieces works at the hospital, and she commented on the day of his release, “You must have been really sick, because they just don’t keep people in the hospital that long otherwise!”

Berg was sent home on May 21 to rest and recuperate. He was home for about two weeks when the AFib returned one night. Back to the hospital. He stayed overnight in the hospital and the doctors were able to change his medications to correct the AFib. He was sent back home and it is hoped that the new medications will keep the AFib at bay (the cardiologists seem very confident) until he can get a laser ablation procedure in the near future for a permanent fix (hopefully). So far, so good! In the meantime, he said it’s definitely time for a fishing trip!



## Indiana - Where Do You Fit In?

We saw this graphic online and thought it was humorous. Don't take it too seriously – it's just a joke!



## Unusual Nature Photos from the Hoosier Outdoors

### Sponsored by Grundens USA

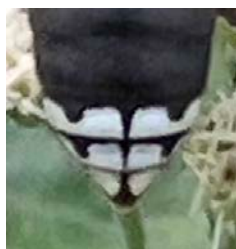
### The Bald-Faced Hornet is a Beneficial Insect



Close-up



Original



The “What is it?” photo from the previous issue was slightly easier than others, since it was correctly identified by eight (8) HOW members. Mike Schoonveld, Phil Bloom, Phil Cox, John Maxwell, Troy McCormick, Mike Lunsford, Phil Seng and Jack Spaulding were all able to identify it. When we drew a name at

random for the special **Gill Fishing** jacket, gloves and hat, and Mike Schoonveld was the lucky winner. Congrats, Mike! We will get the prize sent to you.

As can be seen in the photo to the left, the mystery creature for this issue was a Bald-Faced Hornet (*Dolichovespula maculata*). Bald-faced hornets are a species of wasp, like the yellow jacket. They are mostly black in color, with white markings on their face and head. They also have three distinctive white stripes at the end of their body near their tail. Like most other wasps, their

wings are relatively small and thin, but they are still strong flyers.

Bald-faced hornets build the familiar-looking football-shaped paper nest that hangs from a branch in a tree or large bush. They live throughout most of the United States and southern Canada, although they are more common in the southeastern US. There can be anywhere from a few hundred to several hundred hornets inside, so do not disturb their nest!

Although many people are afraid of them, bald-faced hornets are actually beneficial insects. They hunt down and eat large numbers of harmful insects like aphids, flies, hornworms and other destructive caterpillars. They eat these insect pests and feed vast quantities of them to their young, too. They also pollinate a wide variety of flowers as they gather nectar and pollen during their daily foraging routines.

For this issue, our friends at **Grundens USA** have donated a very nice prize package for the HOW member who is able to guess the right answer to this issue’s “What Is It?” question. This time the prize will be a top tier **Transmit X jacket**. These jackets are an excellent choice on the boat (or anywhere outside, really). 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 below right is part of a close-up of a creature that can be found in the state of Indiana at certain times of the year, although you are not likely to see it in your own back yard. Does it look familiar? Have you ever seen this color pattern when spending time outdoors?



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 mouse, for example, go ahead and guess “deer mouse” (hint: it’s not a mouse). If you think you know the answer, send an email to [thomas.berg@comcast.net](mailto:thomas.berg@comcast.net). If you’re right, you’ll be entered in this issue’s prize drawing!



As mentioned, **Grundens USA** ([www.grundens.com](http://www.grundens.com)) has donated a great Transmit X jacket for the HOW member who guesses the right answer to this issue’s nature question. The winner can choose the size and color of their jacket. This is a fantastic prize with a retail price of about \$200, so start thinking! If multiple people guess correctly, we’ll draw a winner at random from the pool of correct entries. All nature photos here 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.

### Ruger and Magpul Announce 9mm Pistol Collaboration

**Southport, CT:** Sturm, Ruger & Company, Inc. (NYSE: RGR) and Magpul Industries are proud to introduce the RXM™ 9mm pistol. In the competitive 9mm polymer-frame striker-fired pistol market, the RXM sets itself apart. The RXM offers maximum flexibility and customization via a removable stainless steel Fire Control Insert (FCI) set inside an interchangeable Magpul Enhanced Handgun Grip (EHG™). As part of their ongoing collaboration, Ruger and Magpul will be offering a variety of grip frames so that consumers can customize their pistol to meet shifting tastes and needs.

The RXM's slide features a black FNC nitride finish and allows for direct optic mounting of RMR, Delta Point Pro (DPP), and RMRSc pattern optics. Co-witness height steel sights feature a tritium front night sight, providing an excellent sight picture, with or without an optic installed. Front cocking serrations and a precision-rifled barrel complete the premium slide assembly. The pistol is equipped with a flatfaced trigger and easily actuated magazine release, slide release and takedown lever, but the best features are the ones you add. Most major components are designed for Glock Gen 3 compatibility with off-the-shelf parts, holsters, and accessories for nearly unlimited customization, and the RXM is designed to use 9mm magazines compatible with compact or larger double-stack Glock pistols, including Magpul GL9 magazines.

The Magpul EHG offers consumers premium features, including Magpul's 3/4-scale TSP texture, which provides a comfortable, secure grip. Other EHG features include: textured indexing pads for consistent finger/thumb placement; a low-profile, flared magazine well for quick and easy magazine insertion; a trigger guard undercut and beaver tail that promote a high grip for better control; a magazine release scallop for easy access; and a universal-pattern accessory rail for use with a variety of lights and lasers.



**MODEL NUMBER: 19400 | CALIBER: 9MM LUGER**

<b>Capacity</b>	15+1
<b>Grip Frame</b>	Stealth Gray Magpul Enhanced Handgun Grip
<b>Optic Ready</b>	Yes
<b>Front Sight</b>	Tritium, Co-Witness Height
<b>Rear Sight</b>	Steel Drift Adjustable
<b>Manual Safety</b>	No
<b>Magazines Included</b>	Two PMAG 15 GL9

<b>Overall Length</b>	7.15"
<b>Barrel Length</b>	4"
<b>Barrel Material</b>	Alloy Steel
<b>Barrel Finish</b>	Black FNC Nitride
<b>Slide Material</b>	Through-Hardened Alloy Steel
<b>Slide Finish</b>	Black FNC Nitride
<b>Slide Width</b>	1"

<b>Weight</b>	23.2 oz.
<b>Height</b>	5.31"
<b>Grooves</b>	6
<b>Twist</b>	1:10" RH
<b>Available in CA</b>	No
<b>Available in MA</b>	No
<b>UPC</b>	7-36676-19400-1
<b>Suggested Retail</b>	\$499.00

## HOW Supporting Member News

(continued from the previous page)

"The RXM is the result of a tremendous collaboration between two of the most respected brands in the industry," said Ruger President and CEO Chris Killoy. "Loaded with upgraded features, superior ergonomics, and at a price that leaves room for further customization, this American-made handgun is destined to become the best in its class." Magpul's Executive Vice President, Duane Liptak, added "Magpul and Ruger are two of the most renowned brands in the firearms space, with each bringing a unique perspective to this project: Ruger, with its skill at making high-quality guns at very accessible prices, and Magpul, with its performance-improvement-focused accessories. This collaboration has allowed both companies to flex their creative muscles, resulting in a firearm that provides superior features, function, and value."

The RXM is available in two models; each ships with two Magpul GL9 magazines, with either 15- or 10-round capacity.

# RXM™

The RXM™ features a removable stainless steel **Fire Control Insert (FCI)** set inside an interchangeable **MAGPUL Enhanced Handgun Grip (EHG)** for maximum flexibility and customization.

9MM  
LUGER

Caliber

10+1  
15+1

Capacity

4"

Barrel Length

1.0"

Width

23.2  
OZ.

Weight

### Media Contact:

For more information on the RXM or to learn more about the extensive line of award-winning Ruger firearms, please visit [ruger.com](http://ruger.com), [facebook.com/ruger](https://facebook.com/ruger) or [instagram.com/rugersofficial](https://instagram.com/rugersofficial).

HOW members may also contact:

Paul Pluff, Public Relations Manager

Sturm, Ruger & Co., Inc.

Email: [ppluff@ruger.com](mailto:ppluff@ruger.com)

Phone: 413-537-9286





## HOW Supporting Member News



### Anglers Experience High Performance with ESP Series Rods from Norsemen Outdoors

**Lake Mills, IA:** The most comprehensive selection of rod actions available for the avid light line angler, ESP™ offers the largest selection of lengths and specific actions to handle everything from micro jigging and lightweight spinners, to dippin' the brush or spider rigging for slab crappie. ESP rods offer ultra-fast tapered actions that have a truly unique balance of performance criteria never before available in ultra-light rods. The result: superior sensitivity, powerful butt sections for improved hook-sets and fast speed tapers for superior castability. Finally, a complete series of high performance rods designed for the serious panfish and trout angler.

#### Anticipate The Strike!

Experience the greatest sensation ever in fishing rods! Our patent-pending Vibration Amplification Technology (VAT) amplifies vibrations for ultimate sensation directly to the angler's hand. ESP rods deliver unbelievable feel and sensitivity with a revolutionary design that obsoletes traditional graphite rod performance. No more guessing as to what may have been a bump or light strike. Pick up an ESP rod and your immediate reaction will be amazement. So lightweight and so sensitive – you can practically anticipate the strike. In fact, they are so light that a 3-ounce bluegill weighs more than most ESP rods!

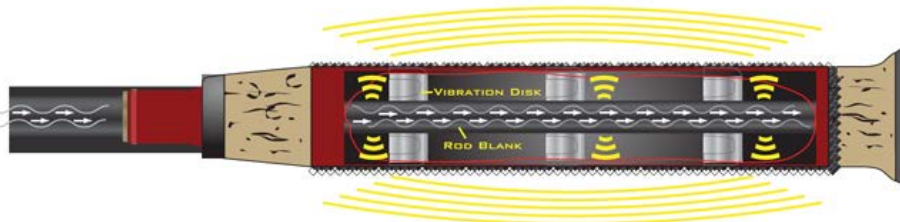


#### Feel Everything

Special high modulus IM6 tubular graphite handles are fitted with a unique internal blank support system that's practically weightless. An ultra-sensitive, high modulus IM-6 graphite blank is suspended inside the handle through a series of highly conductive alloy vibration disks. These unique disks transfer the slightest vibration of the rod blank directly to the resonating handle to amplify and intensify angler feel. There's no cork, foam or plastic surrounding the rod blank to dampen direct vibration transfer. You feel everything, the slightest bump, even subtle changes in line tension!

#### ESP Performance Features

- VAT Handle System.
- Speed tapered micro tip actions.
- 40-Ton High Modulus Graphite Construction.
- Aluminum Oxide Stripper and Tip-Top Guides provide maximum protection at highest line wear points.
- State of the art Chromium SS Micro guide systems provide unmatched durability and friction free performance at a fraction of the weight of traditional guide systems.
- Lightweight graphite slip ring reel seats.
- Deluxe folding hook keeper feature.
- Specifically designed for lightweight line/lure fishing performance.



#### Media Contact:

For more information, please contact: Alan Johnson, Norsemen Outdoors, email: [alan@norsemenoutdoors.com](mailto:alan@norsemenoutdoors.com), phone: 641-592-6160.



## HOW Supporting Member News

### The Gapen Company Makes Productive Fly Fishing Lures for Everything from Bass and Panfish to Pike and Trout (and more)

**Becker, MN:** The Gapen Company has been a family-owned business since 1936 when the Original Muddler Fly was created by Don Gapen. Since then we have been producing quality fishing tackle and pioneering innovation in the tackle industry. You may have heard of the Ugly-Bug, the Bait-Walker, or even the Spin Bee. These are just a few of the quality tackle products we produce today. We also have many great fishing books, videos, rods, and hand-crafted wood lures.



Our distribution center is located in Becker, Minnesota and we strive to keep most of our manufacturing and assembly right here in the United States. It has always been our goal to keep jobs strong in America and that's why many of our home-workers (assemblers) have been with us for years. They are an important part of our business and we look forward to employing more home-workers as our company grows.



Although the Gapen Company produces a wide variety of fishing lures for just about every fish species that swims, some of their most popular lures



**Above:** Large, colorful flies in the Gapen Muskie kit. **Above Left:** Fly fishing kits for Bluegills and Bass (they have both sinking flies and floating flies for bass). **Below:** Gapen's large northern pike flies.

are for fly fishermen. A huge assortment of flies are available, and they can be purchased singly or in kits. The fly kits are extremely popular, and for good reason. They catch fish!

Some of the special fly kits include kits for bluegill, crappie, bass (sinking and floating), pike, muskie, steelhead, trout (eastern, western and general) and saltwater flats. Besides the fly kits, Gapen's also has a vast selection of individual flies, such as dry flies, wet flies, muddlers, nymphs, streamers, flies made specifically for salmon and steelhead, and even specialty flies. Find more info at [www.gapen.com](http://www.gapen.com).

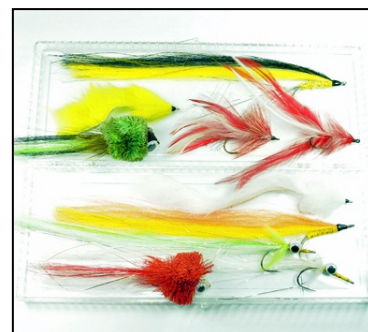
#### Media Contact:

For more information on any of the Gapen fishing products, please contact:

The Gapen Company, Office: 763-263-3558.

Troy Stover, email: [gapen@gapen.com](mailto:gapen@gapen.com), phone: 763-263-3558.

Anne Orth, email: [gapen.anne@gmail.com](mailto:gapen.anne@gmail.com), phone: 763-370-0124.





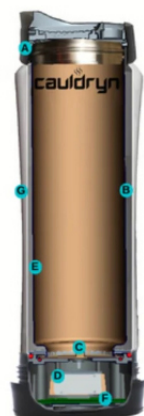
## HOW Supporting Member News

### All Day Temperature Control: The Cauldryn Coffee Pro

*The Cauldryn Coffee Pro is a revolution in keeping Hot drinks at the perfect temperature while on the go!*

**Poway, CA:** The Cauldryn Coffee Pro is the world's first battery powered, all day temperature controlled travel mug made specifically for coffee. It is the final solution for keeping beverages (not just coffee) hot all day when you are on the go.

It all starts with the bottle. Cauldryn uses a double walled, vacuum sealed stainless steel bottle for best insulation. The two bottles are welded together at the top and bottom with both ends having a threaded opening. The cap screws onto the top opening and a control module screws into the bottom.



- cauldryn**  
**COFFEE PRO**
- A** LEAKPROOF LID
  - B** CONTOURED FOR EASY GRIP
  - C** TEMPERATURE CONTROL SENSOR FOR PRECISION HEATING
  - D** SECRET TIL-LIT DISPLAY
  - E** UNLIKE OTHER MUGS THE CAULDRYN IS DESIGNED TO GIVE OFF HEAT IN ORDER TO SET THE MUG TO THE USERS DESIRED TEMPERATURE
  - F** APP CONTROL FOR APPLE AND ANDROID
  - G** VACCUUM INSULATED STAINLESS STEEL

***They said it couldn't be done. The impossible made possible.***

With the industry embracing a major push against single-use water bottles and coffee cups, Cauldryn designers had an obvious choice: A Battery-Powered Temperature control mug. But how do you do it? The answer came from what product engineers had told Cauldryn's chief designers, that boiling water from a battery was too energy-intensive! This led them down another path – one where creativity was needed not just for function but also form – because who doesn't love beautiful objects?

***After 18 months of testing we developed the perfect cup.***

Imagine being able to boil water with just a couple of button presses. Well, now you can! The concept was about creating an efficient heating system and outcomes that no one else had achieved before in terms of how fast it boiled. Using a battery to do it seemed like an impossible feat because people said "that's too expensive or difficult". It took 18 months of testing multiple systems, product evaluations, and more testing until we found out why this worked so well. The Cauldryn design team had created something exceptional: A bottle capable of heating water from a battery with the ability to boil water from snow or ice or maintain hot beverages at the perfect sipping temperature for 10+ hours. **MISSION ACCOMPLISHED!!**

#### Media Contact:

For more info, please contact:  
Ken Ables, Venture  
Email: [kenables09@gmail.com](mailto:kenables09@gmail.com)  
Phone: 619-851-2503.

**cauldryn**  
**COFFEE PRO**



# HOW's Supporting Member Websites

Alps Brands - [www.alpsbrands.com](http://www.alpsbrands.com)  
Archery Trade Association - [www.archerytrade.org](http://www.archerytrade.org)  
B'n'M Pole Company - [www.bnmpoles.com](http://www.bnmpoles.com)  
Black River Tools - [www.blackrivertools.com](http://www.blackrivertools.com)  
BoatUS - [www.boatus.com](http://www.boatus.com)  
BOLT Locks - [www.boltlock.com](http://www.boltlock.com)  
BPI Outdoors - [www.BPIguns.com](http://www.BPIguns.com)  
Cauldryn - [www.cauldryn.com](http://www.cauldryn.com)  
Church Tackle Company - [www.churchtackle.com](http://www.churchtackle.com)  
Cocoons Eyewear - [www.cocoons.com](http://www.cocoons.com)  
Costa - [www.costadelmar.com](http://www.costadelmar.com)  
Daisy Outdoor Products - [www.daisy.com](http://www.daisy.com)  
Dardevle by Eppinger - [www.dardevle.com](http://www.dardevle.com)  
Ducks Unlimited - [www.ducks.org](http://www.ducks.org)  
Egret Baits - [www.egretbaits.com](http://www.egretbaits.com)  
Falcon Guides - [www.falconguides.com](http://www.falconguides.com)  
Finn Tackle Company - [www.finnspoons.com](http://www.finnspoons.com)  
FINS Braid - [www.finsfishing.com](http://www.finsfishing.com)  
Fiocchi Ammunition - [www.fiocchiusa.com](http://www.fiocchiusa.com)  
Flying Fisherman - [www.flyingfisherman.com](http://www.flyingfisherman.com)  
G Pucci & Sons - [www.p-line.com](http://www.p-line.com)  
Gapen Company - [www.gapen.com](http://www.gapen.com)  
Gator Bait Tackle - [www.gatorbaittackle.com](http://www.gatorbaittackle.com)  
Gill Fishing - [www.gillfishing.com](http://www.gillfishing.com)  
Grundens USA - [www.grundens.com](http://www.grundens.com)  
Habit Apparel - [www.habitoutdoors.com](http://www.habitoutdoors.com)  
Hawke Sport Optics - [www.hawkeoptics.com](http://www.hawkeoptics.com)  
HHA Sports - [www.HHAsports.com](http://www.HHAsports.com)  
Hi Mountain Seasonings - [www.himtnjerky.com](http://www.himtnjerky.com)  
Hobie Eyewear - [www.hobieeyewear.com](http://www.hobieeyewear.com)  
HoldFastPro - [www.holdfastpro.com](http://www.holdfastpro.com)  
Hornady Manufacturing - [www.hornady.com](http://www.hornady.com)  
Indiana Destination Development Corporation - [www.visitindiana.com](http://www.visitindiana.com)  
Kehrer Fish Co - [www.kehrerfishcompany.com](http://www.kehrerfishcompany.com)  
Lawrence County Tourism - [www.limestonecountry.com](http://www.limestonecountry.com)  
LensPen - [www.lenspen.com](http://www.lenspen.com)  
Li'L Tuffy SwimBait - [www.ramblingangler.com](http://www.ramblingangler.com)  
MEC Outdoors - [www.mecoutdoors.com](http://www.mecoutdoors.com)  
Mepps by Sheldons', Inc - [www.mepps.com](http://www.mepps.com)  
Mercer Sport - [www.mercersport.com](http://www.mercersport.com)  
Mister Twister - [www.mistertwister.com](http://www.mistertwister.com)  
MOJO Outdoors - [www.mojooutdoors.com](http://www.mojooutdoors.com)  
Moving Water Outfitters - [www.mwoutfitters.com](http://www.mwoutfitters.com)  
Nat'l Shooting Sports Foundation - [www.nssf.org](http://www.nssf.org)

National Wild Turkey Federation - [www.nwtf.org](http://www.nwtf.org)  
Nesco Vacuum Sealers - [www.nesco.com](http://www.nesco.com)  
Norsemen Outdoors - [www.norsemenoutdoors.com](http://www.norsemenoutdoors.com)  
Nothead Tackle - [www.notheadtackle.com](http://www.notheadtackle.com)  
O.F. Mossberg & Sons, Inc. - [www.mossberg.com](http://www.mossberg.com)  
Off Shore Tackle - [www.offshoretackle.com](http://www.offshoretackle.com)  
Old Salt Angling - [www.oldsaltangling.com](http://www.oldsaltangling.com)  
Otis Technology - [www.otistec.com](http://www.otistec.com)  
Outdoor Edge - [www.outdooredge.com](http://www.outdooredge.com)  
Owner Hooks - [www.ownerhooks.com](http://www.ownerhooks.com)  
Pheasants Forever - [www.pheasantsforever.org](http://www.pheasantsforever.org)  
Pradco - [www.pradcooutdoorbrands.com](http://www.pradcooutdoorbrands.com)  
Pro-Cure Bait Scents - [www.pro-cure.com](http://www.pro-cure.com)  
Pure Fishing - [www.purefishing.com](http://www.purefishing.com)  
Quad 4 Plastics - [www.quad4plastics.com](http://www.quad4plastics.com)  
Rapala VMC - [www.rapala.com](http://www.rapala.com)  
RCBS - [www.rcbs.com](http://www.rcbs.com)  
Renfro Productions - [www.renfroproductions.com](http://www.renfroproductions.com)  
Riton Optics - [www.ritonoptics.com](http://www.ritonoptics.com)  
Roberts Camera - [www.robertscamera.com](http://www.robertscamera.com)  
Seaguar Fishing Lines - [www.seaguar.com](http://www.seaguar.com)  
Shipshewana/LaGrange County CVB - [www.visitshipshewana.org](http://www.visitshipshewana.org)  
Shooter's Choice - [www.shooters-choice.com](http://www.shooters-choice.com)  
Sierra Bullets - [www.sierrabullets.com](http://www.sierrabullets.com)  
Speedhook Specialists - [www.speedhook.com](http://www.speedhook.com)  
Sporting Classics - [www.sportingclassics.com](http://www.sportingclassics.com)  
Spypoint Trail Cameras - [www.spypoint.com](http://www.spypoint.com)  
St. Croix Rods - [www.stcroixrods.com](http://www.stcroixrods.com)  
Sturm, Ruger & Co. - [www.ruger.com](http://www.ruger.com)  
Swab-Its - [www.swab-its.com](http://www.swab-its.com)  
Sweet Owen CVB - [www.sweetowencvb.org](http://www.sweetowencvb.org)  
Target Communications Outdoor Books - [www.targetcommbooks.com](http://www.targetcommbooks.com)  
Toyota Motor Sales - [www.toyotanewsroom.com](http://www.toyotanewsroom.com)  
Traveler's Guide to Firearms Laws of 50 States - [www.bookvalueusa.com](http://www.bookvalueusa.com)  
TTI-Blakemore Fishing - [www.ttiblakemore.com](http://www.ttiblakemore.com)  
Vicious Fishing - [www.getvicious.com](http://www.getvicious.com)  
Vortex Optics - [www.vortexoptics.com](http://www.vortexoptics.com)  
Whitetails Unlimited - [www.whitetailsunlimited.com](http://www.whitetailsunlimited.com)  
Winchester Ammunition - [www.winchester.com](http://www.winchester.com)  
W.R. Case - [www.wrcase.com](http://www.wrcase.com)  
Z-Man Fishing - [www.zmanfishing.com](http://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 2025 Conference:**

([www.professionalloutdoormedia.org](http://www.professionalloutdoormedia.org))

Toledo, OH

June 23-25, 2025

**ICAST Show 2025:**

([www.ICASTfishing.org](http://www.ICASTfishing.org))

Orlando, FL

July 15-18, 2025

**OWAA 2025 Conference:**

([www.owaa.org](http://www.owaa.org))

Chattanooga, TN

August 19-21, 2025

**AGLOW 2025 Conference:**

([www.aglowinfo.org](http://www.aglowinfo.org))

Eau Claire, WI

September 21-25, 2025

**Indianapolis Fall Boat & RV Show:**

([www.IndySportShow.com](http://www.IndySportShow.com))

Indianapolis, IN

September 19-21, 2025

**Ford Indianapolis Boat, Sport & Travel Show:**

([www.IndySportShow.com](http://www.IndySportShow.com))

Indianapolis, IN

February 20-22 & 25-March 1, 2026

**Indiana Deer, Turkey & Waterfowl Expo:**

([www.IndySportShow.com](http://www.IndySportShow.com))

Indianapolis, IN

February 27-March 1, 2026

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