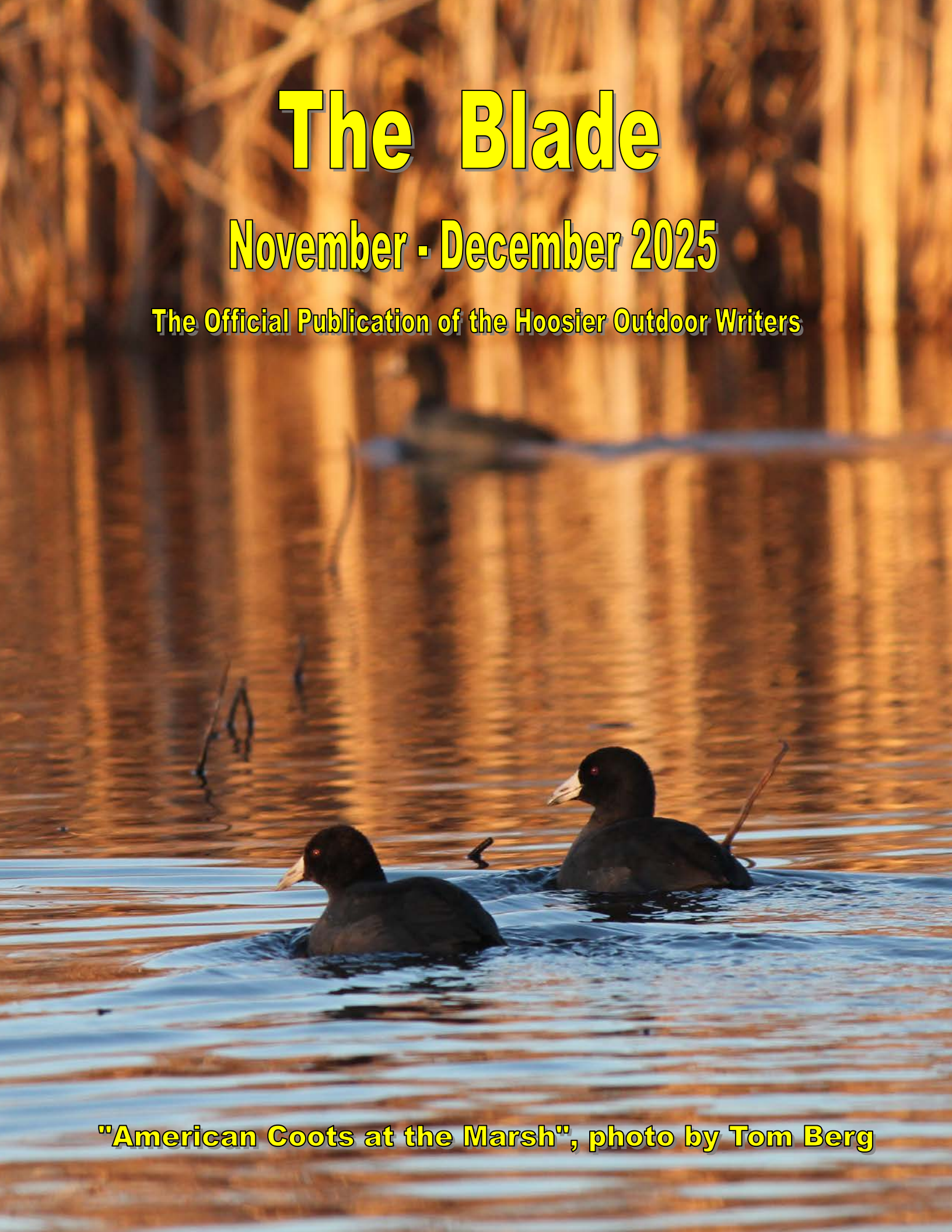


The Blade

November - December 2025

The Official Publication of the Hoosier Outdoor Writers



"American Coots at the Marsh", photo by Tom Berg



Hoosier Outdoor Writers

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

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All submissions and correspondence in regards to the newsletter should be directed to: Tom Berg (e-mail: 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.

On the cover: Two American coots swim along a backwater marsh in northern Indiana on a crisp late-fall day. Coots might look like ducks, but they are not ducks at all; they are actually in the same family as rails and gallinules. They are a native member of Indiana's landscape. Photo by Tom Berg.

President's Message

by Marilyn Culler

Winter is Calling



The winter months may seem like a slow time, but Indiana's great outdoors awaits.

This time of year, there's nothing I love more than to hear the loud, rattling calls of a flock of sandhill cranes overhead, high above the fields and woodlands of western Indiana. I stop and look up. Somehow, seeing these broad-winged, long-necked birds in the flyway between Jasper-Pulaski and Goose Pond Fish and Wildlife Areas warm me on a cold winter day.

A winter hike affords vistas of woodland terrain camouflaged by leaves in summer. Portland Arch Nature Preserve in Fountain County always holds new surprises in winter. Tecumseh's Cave is more visible. Ferns yield greenery to add a little color to the brown forest floor. Cliff Chapman, President/CEO of Central Indiana Land Trust calls this property "the Mount Rushmore of Indiana nature preserves."

The Indianapolis Boat, Sport & Travel show is coming up in February, along with the Deer, Turkey & Waterfowl Expo. But before that, the Heartland Fly Fishing Festival is coming up on January 20 at the Boone County Fairgrounds in Lebanon, Indiana. This isn't a slow time of year...especially if you plan to up your game of fly fishing, buy a boat or an RV, or find a new adventure destination. These events are also great opportunities to engage in interesting conversations with people you don't know!

While the trapping season for bobcat closed early, the season for other furbearers is still open. I'll never forget the story I worked on for *Outdoor Indiana* - "from trapline to fashion salon!" Squirrel and waterfowl seasons are open.

It's time to schedule guided trips for spring and summer. Maybe right now you're on a fishing trip somewhere warm, like Chile or Argentina! Lucky you! More stream fishing is a goal for this coming year, so conversations on places to go has begun.

Bird watching, bird counts, bird photography, goose hunting – winter is the time!

Sunglasses are important year-round for all sorts of outdoor activities. I've been on the hunt for prescription sunglasses – a project that is taking longer than I expected!

January and February are great days to catch up on all the books and magazine articles you didn't read when you were hunting, fishing and enjoying Indiana's great outdoors. Make chili or try a new venison recipe – you'll need freezer space when next fall's deer season rolls around. Wipe down your fishing rods and clean out your tackle box. I don't know about you, but tackle boxes are in disarray by the time I put my kayak in storage for winter. Forage for thistles and leaf skeletons, delicate branches and colorful berries and bring the woods indoors with a dried arrangement in an antique vase or crock.

I recently stopped by for a visit with the property owner of the pond where I fish. On December 24 it was 56 degrees. We stood outside looking at the pond. The weather was too warm for ice fishing, we lamented. Soon enough, spring will arrive and fishing will commence again.

Soon, skunk cabbage will be peeking through the cold ground and soft, white snow trillium blooms will replace pockets of snow on woodland hillsides. In the meantime, take a hike at a nature preserve, wander the backroads with your camera and binoculars, tie some flies for spring fishing. Find ways to feed body and soul as a new year begins.

How are you occupying your winter days? What adventures are you planning for 2026? I'd love to hear from you!

The Hoosier Outdoor Writers

New Members, Past Presidents and Memorial Section

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

Mona Clayton (Associate)
Indianapolis, IN
Sponsor: Tom Berg

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

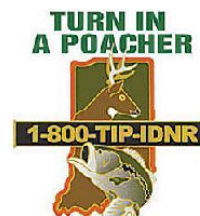
Jack Alkire – HOW President 1979
Bill Beeman – Executive Director Emeritus
 Don Bickel
 Ed Blann
 Charlie Brown
 Gary Carden
Jim “Moose” Carden – HOW President 1982-83
 George Carey
 John Case
Bill Church – HOW President 1972
 Gene Clifford
 Jack “Big Jake” Cooper
 Mark Cottingham
Larry Crecelius – HOW President 2003
 Jerry Criss
 Gary “Dox” Duxtater
 Dick Forbes
Tom Glancy – HOW President 1977
 Dale Griffith
 Phil Hawkins
 Fred Heckman
Marty Jaranowski – HOW President 1996
Phil Junker – HOW President 1975+2002
 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



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). 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

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>

Annual HOW Conference

Make Plans Now to Attend the 2026 Annual HOW Conference At Pokagon State Park!

The 56th meeting of the Hoosier Outdoor Writers will take place on the weekend of **April 10-12, 2026** at the Potawatomi Inn inside Pokagon State Park, near Angola, IN. The main meeting will occur on Saturday, April 11th. This is shaping-up to be another great conference, so make your plans to attend now!

The weekend conference activities will begin with the annual HOW Fun Shoot on Friday, April 10. We are also planning to have our traditional Friday Evening Barbecue at one of the park shelters for all conference attendees who would like to arrive on Friday.

We are still working on booking speakers and seminars for the meeting on Saturday, and more details and the conference registration form will be forthcoming in upcoming editions of *The Blade*. As usual, you don't have to attend any of the events on Friday if your schedule only allows you to be present at the Saturday meeting.

Planning to Stay Overnight at the Potawatomi Inn?

If you would like to stay overnight inside Pokagon State Park, you are in luck. We have a block of rooms reserved at the Potawatomi Inn at a discounted price for HOW Conference attendees and their guests. You can stay overnight or for the entire weekend. Our block of rooms is not extremely large, so don't wait to make your reservation. When you are ready to book your room, check out the details below.

POTAWATOMI INN ROOM RESERVATIONS

Group/Promotional Code: Sent via email.

Our rates are listed below. The HOW group code was sent via email, but if you lost it or need help making your reservations, contact Tom Berg.

Two Queen Size beds:

(Friday night 4-10-26 and/or Saturday night 4-11-26): \$130.00 per night + tax.

The rooms with full size beds listed below are not part of our room block, so they will go fast (open to the public).

One Full Size bed:

(Friday night 4-10-26 and/or Saturday night 4-11-26): \$89.99 per night + tax.

Two Full Size beds:

(Friday night 4-10-26 and/or Saturday night 4-11-26): \$99.99 per night + tax.

Don't wait to make your room reservation if you will be staying overnight at the Clifty Inn. Our block of discounted rooms will only be available until **February 10, 2026 or until they are all reserved**. As noted above, the rooms with full size beds are not in our room block, so book early. If you have any questions, please contact Tom Berg (thomas.berg@comcast.net) or cell: 219-712-3613.

Note that you may book your room online or call the toll-free reservations line (877-563-4371).



Potawatomi Inn

Pokagon State Park

6 Lane 100 A Lake James

Angola, IN 46703

Reservations: 877-563-4371

Front Desk: 260-833-1077

The 2026 HOW Awards-In-Craft Contest

**The Hoosier Outdoor Writers
would like to thank:**

QUAD 4 PLASTICS

**For sponsoring the 2026
HOW Awards-In-Craft Contests**



The 2026 HOW Awards-In-Craft Contest

HOW CRAFTS AWARD CONTEST RULES

The contest year shall be for material published or aired from January 1, 2025 to December 31, 2025. All submissions, including photography, must have been printed, aired, published or electronically posted during the contest year. Exception: In the Book Contest, books must have been published within the past 10 years (2016-2025). In all cases, the entrant must have been a HOW member when the work was published.

The author, photographer or broadcaster must be an Active or Associate member of HOW.

The author, photographer or broadcaster must have been paid a standard rate for any work entered in the contest. Photos or articles published on a private Website or a not-for-hire Website will not be accepted. Photos/articles that are published, or radio/TV programs that are broadcast in trade for advertising or other non-monetary remuneration or for gratuitous fees (such as \$1) are not permitted.

At this time, blogs will not be accepted as an article. Photo essays (where the only writing is in the captions) will also not be accepted as an article. These types of entries will be disqualified.

This year we will again allow electronic submissions only. We no longer accept paper entries (except in the Book Contest). This has resulted in much less work for entrants, contest coordinators and judges. It also conserves valuable natural resources, which is something of which we can all be proud. Entries must be submitted via email. The only exceptions are in the Broadcast and Book divisions. Tapes/CDs are allowed for Broadcast entries, and physical books are required for the Book contest. See the rules below for details.

RULES FOR SUBMISSION

- 1) Contest entries must be in an electronic form (except books). Entries must be emailed (or postmarked if mailing a CD, DVD or book) **no later than midnight on February 25, 2026**. Entries sent after that date will be disqualified. Send all entries to the proper contest coordinator.
- 2) An official HOW contest entry form must accompany each entry. The entry form must also be sent electronically (except in the Book Contest where a paper entry form may be used). Please type or clearly print entry details into the form (an electronic copy of the form will be provided).
- 3) Send no material that needs to be returned. No original material is required (except for the book contest). As mentioned above, print contest entries and photo contest entries must be sent in an electronic form. In the broadcast contest, links, tapes, recordings and DVDs are welcome.
- 4) All submissions of print entries (either from traditional paper or electronic media) must consist of one electronic copy of each article with bylines removed. This file must be text only – do not scan tearsheets or newspaper/magazine pages. Do not include photos or photo captions. This electronic copy must be submitted as a Microsoft Word Document (.doc) or as a PDF file (.pdf). Entries not following these rules will be disqualified. As mentioned, print entry files must be emailed by the deadline.
- 5) Entries into the broadcast category require only one recording and may be sent by link, CD or DVD formats. Radio and television entries may carry the broadcast station's name and call letters if they are on "as aired" dubbed tapes. TV entries should be dubbed minus commercials if possible to facilitate judging.
- 6) Entries in the photography division must consist of one electronic (digital) copy of each photo. This electronic copy must be saved as a JPEG file (.jpg or .jpeg). Prints, slides and paper copies of photos will not be accepted. Please include a title for each photo entry. Digitally produced photos should not be substantially manipulated. Allowable photo enhancement is limited to standard shooting/darkroom techniques, such as color correction, contrast control and image cropping.
- 7) Entries in the book division must consist of one physical copy of the book. At this time, e-books will not be accepted. If you would like your book returned, either provide a SASE or include a note stating you will pick it up at the HOW Conference. You may also specify that the book be donated to the HOW Raffle.
- 8) An individual article, photo or broadcast may only be entered in one category/division. Entering the same piece in multiple categories/divisions will result in the disqualification of duplicate entries.
- 9) There is a limit of two entries per category, including books.

For all **Article** entries, send submissions to the Writing Contest Coordinator:
Marilyn Culler, Email: contest@hoosieroutdoorwriters.org

For all **Photography** entries, send submissions to the Photo Contest Coordinator:
John Martino, Email: jmartinooutdoors@att.net

For all **Broadcast** and **Book** entries, send submissions to the Broadcast and
Book Contest Coordinator:
Tom Berg, Email: thomas.berg@comcast.net
US Mail: 2142 Nondorf Street, Dyer, IN 46311

CONTEST DIVISIONS

- 1) Writing articles published as 1,000 words or less (Magazine, Newspaper, E-zine).
- 2) Writing articles published as more than 1,000 words (Magazine, Newspaper, E-zine).
- 3) Photography
- 4) Broadcast (Radio-TV-Video)
- 5) Books

WRITING ARTICLE CATEGORIES

- 1) Hunting/Trapping
- 2) Fishing
- 3) Conservation
- 4) General Outdoors (other than hunting, fishing, trapping)

PHOTOGRAPHY CATEGORIES

- 5) Hunting/Trapping
- 6) Fishing
- 7) Outdoor Scenic
- 8) Outdoor Recreation (other than hunting, fishing, trapping)

BROADCAST CATEGORIES

- 9) Best Radio/Podcast Broadcast
- 10) Best TV Broadcast
- 11) Best Video

BOOK CONTEST

- 12) Best Book

2026 HOW AWARDS-IN-CRAFT CONTEST ENTRY FORM

Name: _____

Address: _____

Category _____ Division _____

Title: _____

Where published/aired: _____

Publication/air date: _____

Entries and forms must be emailed or postmarked no later than February 25, 2026



Interesting Bird Sightings in the Great Outdoors



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

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

Report from Mike Lunsford:

HOW member Mike Lunsford has had a wonderful fall as far as photographing migrating warblers. He spotted an increasingly rare **Golden-winged Warbler** (*Vermivora chrysoptera*) in his woods in mid-October, a bird that he had never seen before then.



Above: A golden-winged warbler stops on a branch for a brief moment, and Lunsford was ready with his camera. **Right:** An eastern wood pewee poses perfectly for a nice photo op.

“On that particular day,” he said, “I had heard northern parulas and Tennessee warblers and I even had a chestnut-sided warbler land on my cabin railing, so I knew it was a good day to catch migrating birds. Golden-winged warblers are among the most threatened birds in North America; they are listed as ‘imperiled’ by several birding organizations, mostly because their habitats are disappearing.”

“If you don’t get a photo of one during migrating season, your best bet is to be in Minnesota or a much smaller area in the Appalachians. They migrate to Mexico and South America and just pass through Indiana. To see a bird I have never seen before makes for a special day with the camera.”

Lunsford also often hears but rarely sees **Eastern Wood Pewees** (*Contopus virens*) on his property. “That changed in late September when one stopped and perched on a backyard plant hook to wait for a turn at a water dish,” he observed.

“The wood pewee, a ‘tyrant flycatcher,’ is mostly an inconspicuous bird that prefers to sit on dead tree branches while waiting for insects to fly into range. Their nests are usually built using lichens and are camouflaged so well that they are often seen as stumps on tree trunks. Of course, we knew we had pewees around because no other bird sounds quite like them.”

See the next page for more bird photos and information from fellow HOW members.





Interesting Bird Sightings in the Great Outdoors

Bird Reports Continued...

Report from Mona Clayton:

Our newest HOW member, Mona Clayton, submitted this birding report:

“I first noticed the evidence of a **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** (*Sphyrapicus varius*) before spotting the actual bird,” said Clayton. “As a member of the woodpecker family, the yellow-bellied sapsucker leaves small, shallow holes in tree bark arranged in neat rows. They are migratory visitors, typically seen in central Indiana from fall through spring. Their tapping is quiet and they’re less common in our woodlands than our year-round residents like the red-bellied, hairy, downy, and pileated woodpeckers.”



“In fall of 2025, I observed yellow-bellied sapsuckers on several outings in Marion and Hamilton counties. One morning, while walking through the bedroom, I caught a glimpse of one flying to a small dogwood near the house. I rushed to the living room to reposition my spotting scope, trying to do so stealthily to capture the bird drilling its precise holes. My husband started to walk through the room, and I quickly waved him

back – any movement risked disrupting the bird’s behavior.”

“I put my phone in the PhoneSkoPe case, mounted to the scope, and pressed record. I watched the bird’s beak flick bits of bark with each tiny hole it drilled. Through the magnified view, it appeared grander than its modest size, every feather edged in morning light. Its pale yellow belly would occasionally glow like the faint light of a lantern as it circled the tree, continuing its methodical work. Each hole held the promise of sap – perhaps even a future buffet for other creatures.”

“I noticed the bird lacked the bright red cap and red or bright white neck, marking it as a juvenile. A few glorious minutes passed before the dogs began barking, and the bird flew off to another tree to resume tapping. Even the smallest visitor can turn a quiet morning into an unforgettable field experience.”

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



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

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

For immediate release: October 17, 2025

Hunters Can Donate Deer to Help Feed Hungry Hoosiers

Indiana Conservation Officers encourage Indiana hunters to donate harvested deer to help feed Hoosiers in need.

“Venison harvested through hunting is an important source of nourishment for Hoosier families,” said Col. Steve Hunter, director of DNR Law Enforcement. “Through Hunt for Hunger, hunters can donate a deer and expand that generous impact to even more Hoosiers in need across the state.”

Hunt for Hunger, a program administered by the DNR Division of Law Enforcement, provides grants to the division’s nonprofit partners, including Hoosiers Feeding the Hungry, the Dubois County Sportsmen Club, and Hunters and Farmers Feeding the Hungry, to pay for meat processing fees when hunters donate legally harvested deer.

Participating in the program is simple:

1. Enjoy a deer hunting experience.
2. Harvest a deer.
3. Drop off the field-dressed deer at a local participating processor.
4. Processing fees are paid for by Hunt for Hunger (no cost to the donating hunter).
5. The processor creates healthy venison burger to distribute to food banks.

The participating organizations notify food banks throughout Indiana when venison is ready to be collected from certified Hunt for Hunger processors. The food banks distribute venison to soup kitchens and food pantries.

More than 500,000 pounds of venison have been donated by Hoosier hunters since the program’s inception in 2008. For information on donating harvested deer and a list of participating processors, please visit on.IN.gov/huntforhunger.

Media contact:

Capt. Jet Quillen, DNR Law Enforcement, phone: 317-903-1671, email: jquillen@dnr.IN.gov.



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

For immediate release: December 5, 2025

Stay Safe; Always Assume You are on ‘Thin Ice’

Every winter, thousands of Hoosiers safely enjoy fishing, skating, hiking, or just sliding around on frozen ponds and lakes. And every year, people drown after falling through ice. Don’t let this happen to you or anyone around you.

Indiana Conservation Officers remind Hoosiers to be careful as they begin to participate in activities such as ice fishing, ice skating, or snowmobiling. Remember to put safety first. Take caution when going on frozen lakes, ponds, rivers, streams, and retention ponds. And watch for others who may venture out on frozen waterways and find themselves in trouble.

Similar to needing to drive differently on snowy versus clear roads, safely having fun on ice may require you to adjust from what you have done in the past. You should believe all ice is thin ice unless proven otherwise.

Here are a few tips to remember when considering standing on or walking on a frozen body of water:

- Assume no ice is safe ice.
- Test the thickness of the ice with an ice auger. At least 4 inches is recommended for ice fishing; 5 inches is recommended for snowmobiling.
- If you don’t know the thickness of the ice, don’t go on it.
- Wear a life jacket or flotation coat.
- Carry ice picks and rope gear.
- Before going on the ice, leave a note of your whereabouts with a friend or family member.
- Don’t test the thickness of the ice while alone.

Wearing a life jacket is especially important when on ice. If you fall through, a life jacket will keep your head above the water until help arrives. Also, remember that a new coating of snow, while perhaps beautiful, can make for treacherous ice conditions. Snow can serve as insulation, causing water to freeze at a slower rate. When snow and rain freeze into ice, it is not as strong as solid, clear ice.

Another potentially dangerous situation is when you see a pet or other animal in distress on the ice. Do not go after it. Instead, contact local emergency response personnel, who are equipped to make a rescue.

A few more tips:

- Some bodies of water can appear to be frozen solid but still have thin ice in unexpected areas.
- Avoid flowing water, such as rivers and streams, when covered by a layer of ice.
- Similarly, water surrounded by sand may freeze with inconsistencies in the ice thickness.
- Underground springs, wind, waterfowl, and other animals can also keep areas of ice thin.

Enjoy the winter weather but make safety a priority.

Media contact:

Capt. Jet Quillen, DNR Law Enforcement, phone: 317-903-1671, email: jquillen@dnr.IN.gov.

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

For immediate release: December 6, 2025

Indiana Bobcat Trapping Season Reaches Quota, Closes Early

The Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has closed the bobcat trapping season after reaching the statewide quota.

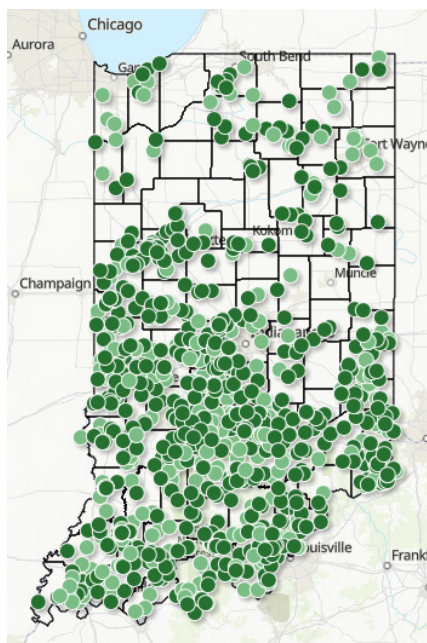
The season was scheduled to run from Nov. 8 to Jan. 31, or until the quota of 250 bobcats was reached. Any bobcats caught the same day as the closure may be kept.

The framework of Indiana's bobcat season was carefully designed with a total harvest limit based on population data collected throughout the state. Databases and reporting mechanisms were put into place to allow for close monitoring

of the total season harvest. The season bag limit is one bobcat per trapper.

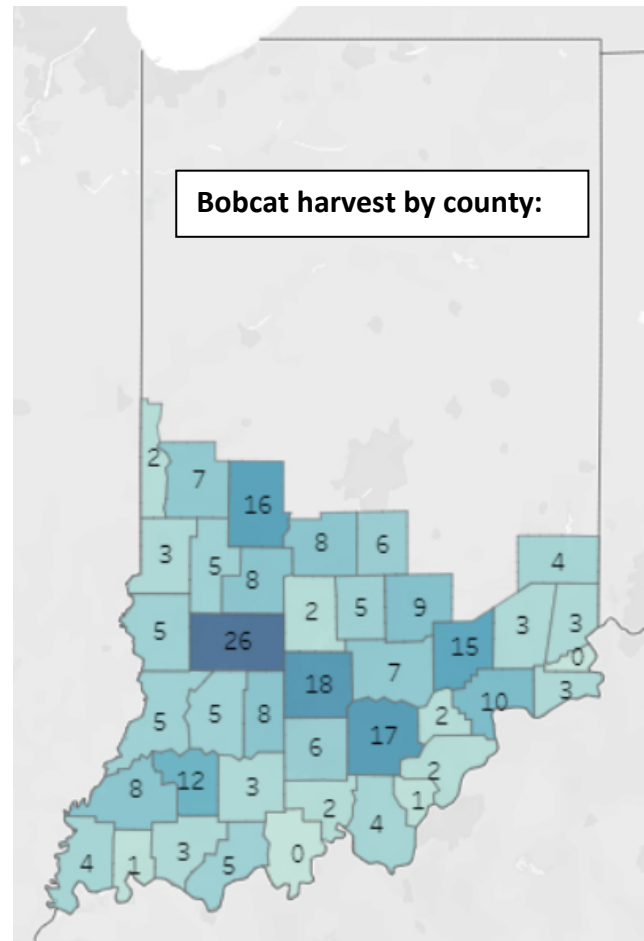
“Licensed trappers had a successful first bobcat trapping season,” said Geriann Albers, DNR’s furbearer and gamebird program leader. “DNR will review what we’ve learned from this season as we move forward with regulated harvest and bobcat management.”

Additional information on the bobcat trapping season can be found at: on.IN.gov/bobcat-season.



Bobcat Sightings

- Confirmed
- Credible



Media contact:

Geriann Albers,
DNR Furbearer and Gamebird Program
Leader, phone: 812-822-3304, email:
galbers@dnr.IN.gov.

Expedition Unknown, Take Two!

Story and photos by Troy McCormick

I was totally floored when I received a call last fall to let me know that Josh Gates, host of the Emmy award winning TV show **Expedition Unknown**, had asked for me to be on another episode!

This time the story occurs in northern California, and it is about an 1892 stagecoach robbery that I had first heard of when I was a young firefighter with the U.S. Forest Service, fighting a forest fire in Redding, CA, almost 40 years ago!



I dove right into my research and began looking for possible locations to film and hunt for the lost gold from the robbery. I was working with the show's executive producer, the scriptwriter, and the field producer. We held numerous Zoom meetings and planned the shoot for February of 2026. The site of the stagecoach robbery was on federal BLM land, so we also began a time-consuming process of applying for permits.

The production company flew me out to Redding, CA four days early to scout locations and secure permissions. I was also told that another guest was being brought in to cross-market two Discovery Channel shows. When Josh Gates arrived on location for the shoot, so did Parker Schnabel, from the TV show Gold Rush. It was great working with Josh again, and Parker was another fun celebrity to spend time with.

Everything was great, except for the weather. We spent four days filming in absolutely pouring down rain. The

(continued on next page)



local weather man said there was an atmospheric river dumping on the region, and we believed him. I was using the new Minelab Manticore metal detector and I was very thankful it was waterproof! But as tough as it was for those of us in front of the cameras to remain positive, while being cold and very wet, the cameramen had it worse trying to keep the video cameras dry and rain drops off the lenses.

We finally got a break on the fifth day and saw some sunshine. I personally had a blast that final day as we filmed while riding ATVs in the mud and across swollen creek crossings. I can't think of anything that I have enjoyed more in my career than filming an episode of Expedition Unknown with Josh Gates and Parker Schnabel.

When I thanked Josh for having me back on the show he said, "Absolutely, you're a fan favorite." That was high praise from a man that hosts an adventure show that is available in 220 countries and territories across the globe.

If you want to watch the episode, you will find it on the Discovery Channel, Season 16, Episode 3, "The Great Gold Rush Shootout." Be sure to look for the rattlesnake hatband that I am wearing on my adventure hat, as it was made for me by HOW past President Alan Garbers. Thanks again, Alan!



The Best of Three!

by Jarrett Manek

There are many sayings associated with the word or letter *three*. “**Three strikes and you are out**”, “**one, two, three, go**”, “**three cheers**” and of course, “**third time is a charm**”. When I shot my first buck many years ago, I passed on him **three** times. He was a **3x3** or a little six-pointer (**three** points on each side) and the only reason I passed on him was because I saw a bigger buck the evening before and thought he would come back. It was a little presumptive of me as a new hunter, especially since I had never harvested a deer yet. So after the little six-pointer walked past me **three** times and I sat all day at the base of a tree, I figured after the **third** time, it was meant to be. I was sure proud of that little deer even though I did not really know what to do afterwards. I had to call my girlfriend’s father to coach me on field dressing and processing the deer. The self- processing, cutting, grinding and packaging part became a group effort with my parents and my girlfriend’s family in her grandparents’ garage. I was taught about the whole aspect of deer hunting from start to finish.

My first buck with a bow was the following year. I saw him **three** times also. He was chasing a doe and on the **third** pass by the stand provided a nearly straight down shot opportunity. “**Three**”, has become even more significant this year during the opening of the deer gun season. Since I had tagged out earlier than normal during bow season, it was my intention to continue with tradition and still go out for the opening morning of gun season to at least watch for deer. To my surprise with anticipation, my daughter, Abby, asked me to go sit with her in one of our buddy stands. It wasn’t with her boyfriend, who was also hunting, but with me. We reminisced about a few seasons previously where she shot her buck on opening day and I was with her. On that hunt, I waited and waited for her to shoot, but it was not until after the buck walked back and forth in front of her **three** times that she made up her mind to pull the trigger.

During the spring turkey season last year, the **three** of us, Wyatt (my son), Abby (my daughter) and myself, harvested a **triple** at the same time. **Three** big mature turkeys on opening day. It was a “**one, two, three, BOOM**” shooting all at once!

On opening day of the deer gun season this year, we got in the stand and as always, argued quietly on which side would be best to sit. We got all settled in and waited patiently.

Immediately we heard the sound of a deer walking in the leaves to our right and as it approached the edge of the field, we could barely see a silhouette walking in front of us. It was a doe from what we could make out. Not soon after legal shooting light, we got a glimpse of some more deer faintly off in the distance of the field. **Three** does. Then the sound and crunch of leaves to our left. It sounded like a deer walking, but not towards us. It was going out towards the field below us in the ditch. With binoculars raised and looking intently, I got a glimpse of antlers. I grunted to get his attention but could only see part of him due to the thick cover along the edge. I grunted again and this time his attention was focused towards us as he entered the field. I grunted a **third** time and he started to curl up towards our direction.

At this point, Abby still could not see him but could hear him walking through the dry soybeans. I told her he’s coming and to be patient. He was getting closer and I whispered to get ready. She could only get a glimpse of his legs looking through the brush until he got into the opening. At this point, her head was down on the scope and she was locked in on picking a spot just behind the shoulder. I told her to just wait. Seconds felt like minutes and I could see that he is a nice mature buck. Just like clockwork, when he got to about forty yards and



(continued on next page)

was close as he was going to get broadside, I made a bleat sound. Abby knows what that means, and as soon as the deer stopped to look, she pulled the trigger. Of course, the adrenaline, shaking, and smiles occurred immediately following. Being out in the open field, it was not hard to watch him and the direction he was going. But there was a point when he kept running to the middle of the field that I had to ask her if she felt like she had made a good shot. She did not hesitate to say “YES DAD!”

The buck finally stopped in the middle of the field and looked back. In the binoculars, I could see some blood on his side, and he got unsteady on his feet and finally fell. What happened next was just as exciting, as we were waiting for the adrenaline to subside before getting down.

As we were taking our deep breaths, we saw another buck nearly the same size across the field heading parallel to us. When he got within proximity of being downwind of her dead buck, he made a beeline straight to it into the field. As he hovered over her dead buck, he pawed at it and lowered his head and tried to fight with it.

Then, a second buck emerged from the edge of the field; however, this one is a lot bigger. A huge, very impressive buck walked towards the other one. As he got closer to the other buck, he postured as if he wanted to fight, but chose not to. I think he was just telling the other smaller buck that he is bigger. Both bucks eventually ended up walking off past our other stand (which no one was in). It was a good day to see **three** bucks that morning.

The anticipation eventually got the best of us and we got down and headed towards her buck, but before we did, I made her pick up the blood trail and location where she hit him. It is always good practice for a young hunter to hone their tracking skills even though we knew where the buck was. It wasn't long that she got focused on the tracking and not necessarily just heading towards the downed deer. With a field of standing beans looking at ground level, the deer and location were invisible and following the track became a fun challenge.

Finally, we arrived at the end of our track and I will never forget the sigh of relief, her big smile and statement saying “Dad, that could have been a spike or forky for all I really knew. I got so excited from listening to you I did not even see the antlers until now. I did not really know how big he was!” It was her biggest buck to date!



We said our prayers of thanksgiving for the blessing as we laid hands on him, and she then told me that I was her lucky charm. She has gone **three for three** and I have been with her for her last **three** bucks she has harvested. The words from a child and my daughter at 19 who is growing up so quickly could not have been sweeter! I continue to cherish all the time in the woods I spend with my kids.

And as a side note:

All **three** of us tagged out on bucks this year (see next page); I was with both kids when they did and both of their deer were bigger than mine. Sometimes it seems like a **three-ring circus**, and this might seem a little **three dimensional**, but I would not have traded the memory for anything, not a **three-piece suit**, not a **triple-decker sandwich**, and not even a **three-wheeler**! This year was better than hitting a **three bagger**!

HOW Member News

HOW Members Enjoy the 2025 Deer Season

Jarrett Manek (Depauw, IN)

This report is from HOW Past President and long-time deer hunter Jarrett Manek:

Back to Back Bucks and All Tagged Out!

The thrill and anticipation of the hunt is what gets most folks into the woods for deer season. When you add extra components to the challenge, it makes it even more memorable. Bow season is special for me since I have hunted with a traditional longbow for over 20 years, and my son, Wyatt, has continued with enjoying the challenge using a traditional recurve. He was gifted this recurve from a retired warden in northern Wisconsin two years ago and has been determined to harvest a buck with it. Through dedication and hours/days of practice, shooting straight, he hit his mark. This year, we experienced something we may never achieve again for a great photo opportunity: back to back bucks!



There is something magical about getting up close and in a deer's breathing space. That is what needs to happen to shoot traditional. Everything needs to come together perfectly: wind, sound, focus and more. An early morning sit in November provided just that, times two. Within fifteen minutes I had a nice buck with a big body and heavy rack that I grunted to within forty yards. But he would not come out of the tree line. After he looked and could not see another buck, he headed down the path through the thicket. Within minutes, my neighbor texted me asking if I shot a deer because he had one running full speed in front of his house (which is not too far from our stands). Of course, I said no, but I had not checked in with Wyatt or his girlfriend, Audrey. Wyatt responded and said he did shoot a nice one. At first I had negative thoughts of a wounded deer and a long track. However, the deer that my neighbor saw was just coincidentally in the area running away from our direction. Everything happened so quickly. The same buck I saw had gone right past Wyatt for a 12 yard shot. His arrow found its mark and hit both lungs for a quick find and harvest.

The next morning in a different stand location, at nearly the same time as the day before, within fifteen minutes of getting in the stand I had deer all around me. I heard a grunt and saw a small forked buck, then saw the doe he was following. After my grunt back to them, the bigger buck, which was very close and unbeknown to me, started walking through the thicket towards my stand. At 30 yards, I saw him coming and knocked an arrow. He was closing the distance on a very fast walk and all I got a glimpse of was a nice mature set of antlers. I then focused on location for a shot, a small spot on his body and a prayer that he would give me a good opportunity to draw back undetected. Everything lined up perfectly. He stopped with his head behind a tree and his body in front of a tree at 16 yards. I aimed small and missed small, watching my arrow hit just where I wanted. The photo opportunity for Wyatt and I together with our bucks and traditional bows will be forever etched in my mind.

The freezer is full and so are the memories!

2025 Deer Season Continued

Ken McBroom (Benton, KY)

HOW Past President Ken McBroom continues to pass on the hunting tradition to the next generation. We love it! Here is his report:

A New Tradition. What is tradition? *It is the transmission of customs or beliefs from generation to generation.*

“I realized that the 2025 deer season marked the second season with my nephew Rylee,” said McBroom, “and we hunted the opening weekend together. Last season, he got a shot at a spike buck while we hunted together, but he missed. The adrenaline rush was obvious, and I knew he would want more.”

“This season was better,” he continued. “The hunt only lasted an hour or so, not counting the lessons in deer processing. It was the perfect hunt for a young hunter: fast, furious, and successful. A doe rushed in and



put on the brakes when she saw us sitting in the brush. She was just 25 yards away. I was whispering to him to take the shot when a nice buck suddenly ran up, hot on her trail.”

“I didn’t have to tell Rylee to shoot. He was ready. The shot was head-on but was perfectly placed. The buck only made it 50 yards before falling. The adrenaline rush was off the charts for both of us; an experience that definitely keeps the tradition alive.”

Great job on getting Rylee hooked on hunting, Ken!



2025 Deer Season Continued

Brandon Butler (Armstrong, MO)

“On October 15, I eloped to Custer State Park in the Black Hills of South Dakota to marry the best woman I have ever known,” said Butler. “Lauren is an outdoorswoman through and through. We actually met at a Missouri Outdoor Communicators conference. She is a competitive bass tournament angler who has traveled the country fishing competitively, too.”

“Lauren also loves hunting, and she has now shot a bigger buck than me two out of the three past years,” he continued. “She dropped this 155-inch bruiser in Randolph County, Missouri with a rifle she built herself.

“Even though it is not as big, I’m proud of my buck, too. Mine was also killed in Randolph County.”

Congrats to Mr. and Mrs. Butler on their wedding and also on the two excellent whitetail bucks they harvested this year!



2025 Deer Season Continued

Tom Berg (Dyer, IN)

Although HOW Executive Director Tom Berg has not been hunting deer nearly as long as other members, he still looks forward to opening day as much as our longtime, diehard deer hunters. He was lucky enough to have another great deer season this year, too. Here is his report:

“My deer hunting season ended very quickly in mid-November on the opening weekend of firearms season,” commented Berg. “On opening morning I saw several does and three or four spike bucks early, but nothing I wanted to harvest so early in the season. I hunted again that afternoon and saw more does and first year fawns, but no good bucks. I returned early the next morning and was in the stand again before dawn. A group of three does entered the field in front of me to the west, about 150 yards away. Suddenly, a buck entered the field and caught up with the does, and then proceeded to walk northwards slightly ahead of them.”

“I decided to take this deer if he gave me a good shot. I steadied my rifle and found him in my scope. He was still walking slowly so I yelled ‘Hey!’ Evidently it wasn’t loud enough because he did not stop or look up. I yelled again, louder this time, and he stopped and looked towards me. As soon as he stopped, I squeezed the trigger. He jumped and ran about 15 yards, then fell. He was a young 7-point buck, and I was happy with him. My Henry Long Ranger .308 is a very accurate rifle!”

“I also had a doe tag, so I decided to stay in the stand for another hour or so since more does were moving in the field to the east of me. Evidently the shot did not spook them. Four does were in that eastern field, and they were gradually getting closer to me. They were very suspicious, though, as they kept looking up towards my treestand. Their ears were straining for signs of danger from my direction, and their noses were up in the air. They could probably smell me since a strong west wind was blowing through my stand and towards them. If they would get just 10 yards closer, I would take the shot. But that’s when they spooked. All four tails shot up and they were gone in a flash of white!”

“That afternoon I was back in the same treestand, and the wind had shifted. At about 3:30pm a group of three does entered the field to the east, and this time they were within range right away – only about 50 yards away. As soon as they turned broadside to me, I picked one out and pulled the trigger. She turned and ran back towards the trees and disappeared, but did not show any signs of being hurt.”

“I made a mental note of where she entered the woods, and when I climbed down and checked that area for a blood trail, I quickly found it. She ran about 50 yards to get to the woods, but she had only gone five yards into the trees before collapsing. I was very thankful to have a full freezer!”

“This is the first time I ever tagged-out on both a buck and a doe on the same day! It was bittersweet to have my deer hunting season end so quickly, but I won’t miss sitting in the deerstand when the temperature drops below zero.”



2025 Deer Season Continued

Rick Bramwell (Pendleton, IN)

HOW Past President Rick Bramwell's report details how he is still learning, even after many decades of deer hunting. Learning is something we should all strive to do!

"Early in the firearms season," he said, "I missed a good buck, while my hunting buddy Gary Cloud harvested a big doe. Heavy rains drove us home, but I did return."



"The next day I sat in my favorite spot for a morning hunt, but only saw one deer. At about 11:00 am, I shouldered my rifle and headed for my truck. About 60 yards up the hill, I jumped a covey of deer. One doe stopped in front of a big cedar tree. I quickly found her in my scope and squeezed the trigger. The deer collapsed at the shot. This is the first deer I've harvested on the property in 20 years. The population has jumped appreciably and needs to be thinned."

"I kept hunting during muzzleloader season. Although my deer season was not what I had desired, the things I learned make me look forward to next season. The biggest revelation was that I had been hunting this one area wrong for 20 years."

"Besides the doe I harvested and the eight-point buck I missed, I saw more deer on this property than I'd ever seen before. The day I harvested the doe, I saw 14 deer. A week ago, on Wednesday, I saw nine."

"On that morning, I decided to back off and sit on the edge of a long, narrow opening. The wind was right for this decision. At 8:58 am, a deer blew behind me. I was turning my head slowly, never expecting deer to come from where I had parked my truck. I turned to see five deer staring at me. They didn't stay long, and even though this was a missed opportunity, the experience gave me a lot of information."

"At midday, I backtracked the herd to see where they came from. Between me and my truck is a 100-yard swath of timber coming off a ridge – a perfect funnel between two open areas. Next, I followed the tracks to where the deer were headed. Another surprise; they did not take the easy course. There were two trails coming together at the end of a short draw. The deer went down one steep bank and up the other. I found this to be a heavily used trail. Apparently, they chose this over going into the open even for a few steps."

"On a previous evening hunt, I chose the wrong stand site and never saw a deer. This time, I would sit at the edge of a pasture not far from a barn. On some evenings, the property manager had seen as many as 10 deer in the pasture. I sat at the point where a narrow strip of pasture joined the main pasture. It sat between two steep knobs. In years past, I had hunted the base of the far hillside overlooking a small creek. There was a trail, and sometimes I saw deer, but it was not reliable. I was about to find out why."

"At 5:10 pm, three does came off the top of the hill, crossed the creek, and entered the pasture 85 yards away. I anchored my CVA Accura muzzleloader against a tree. I was gradually lowering my crosshairs on the closest deer when my gun went off. I wear oversized gloves because of arthritis in my hands. There was enough pressure from the glove to activate the trigger before I was ready to squeeze it."

"The other two ran off. This one stood still. I was thinking she was hit, then she disappeared, making me believe deer down. I reloaded and slowly walked towards the last place I had seen her. At 35 yards, the other two deer came back across the creek and stood broadside. I couldn't shoot, not knowing the fate of the doe."

"Finally, the two saw me and headed back to the hill. Following them was the third deer, seemingly unharmed. This group joined a fourth deer, which might have been a buck. All these years, I'd been sitting until dark, while the deer had often come out behind me and grazed just out of sight around the creek bend. Lesson learned."

Lunsford Contributes Photo Skills for GP 2026 Calendar

Many HOW members are familiar with Goose Pond Fish & Wildlife Area (FWA) near Linton, IN. This 8,000+ acre property is dedicated to providing quality recreation opportunities, including fishing, hunting, wildlife viewing and trapping. Bird watching, in particular, is extremely popular here. In fact, more than 300 bird species have been documented at Goose Pond FWA. Note: Check-in is required.

The Friends of Goose Pond organization was formed and in early 2010 the group launched the first annual Marsh Madness Sandhill Crane Festival. This popular festival helps illustrate the Goose Pond wetland success story with waterfowl and the recovery of the migrating sandhill cranes.



During the festival there are usually large numbers of migratory waterfowl present such as snow geese and many different species of ducks. The waterfowl are usually staging by the tens of thousands during late winter along with the cranes, waiting for the ice to go out farther north.



Like Lunsford is one of the contributing photographers for the calendar. His photo of a group of American white pelicans is the featured image for February (see above).

If any HOW members would like to purchase a calendar (\$15 each), all proceeds go to the Friends of Goose Pond.

The Friends of Goose Pond is a non-profit organization, and their online store helps them raise funds for the group (<https://friendsofgoosepond.org/shop/>). One of the items they sell is their popular wildlife calendar. For 2026, HOW member



Membership Changes and Member Contact Info

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

Mona Clayton: 7400 Lantern Rd., Indianapolis, IN 46256, phone: 305-304-5348,
Email: rookiebirdher@gmail.com

The following HOW members have new contact info. Please make a note of it:

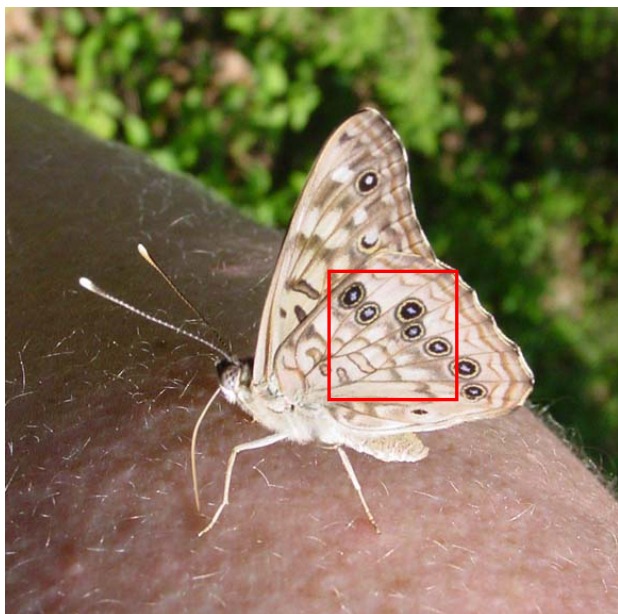
Kenny Bayless: Home landline phone is gone, use cell phone instead: 812-241-3158.
Alan Garbers: New cell phone: 928-495-8420.

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

Unusual Nature Photos from the Hoosier Outdoors

Sponsored by Hornady

The Hackberry Emperor Butterfly is Fearless Around Humans



Close-up



Original



The “What is it?” photo from the previous issue was just as difficult as the previous one, since it was again correctly identified by only four (4) HOW members. Mike Lunsford, Brian Waldman, John Maxwell and Phil Cox were all able to identify it. When we drew a name at random for the **Pure Fishing** tackle prize package, Brian Waldman was the lucky winner. Congrats, Brian!

We will have the prize shipped directly to you.

As can be seen in the photo to the left, the mystery creature for this issue was a Hackberry Emperor butterfly (*Asterocampa celtis*). Although many species of butterflies are shy of humans and fly away if we get too close, the hackberry emperor butterfly often acts just the opposite. These small butterflies routinely fly in circles around a person and then boldly land right on their skin! They appear to be daring, but they are actually interested in ingesting the

sweat on people’s skin to obtain the salts that are in the sweat.

Hackberry emperors, also known simply as hackberry butterflies, get their name from the tree that is the host plant for their caterpillars: the hackberry tree. These butterflies only lay their eggs on hackberry leaves, similar to monarch butterflies that will only lay their eggs on milkweed plants.

Hackberry butterflies are generally brown or tan in color, with a row of white or blackish dots along the edge of their wings. Their hind wings have several small, but very distinctive eyespots that are black with a light blue center. These eyespots are also ringed with a yellowish color.



For this issue, our friends at **Hornady** have donated a very nice prize for the HOW member who is able to guess the right answer to this issue’s “What Is It?” question. This time the prize is a Hornady RAPID Safe Night Guard. This bedside/nightstand safe features RFID technology for easy access and unmatched security. It even has a digital clock and USB charging ports. See below for additional info.

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

Tom Berg has posed another Nature Photo mystery. The photo shown at right is part of a close-up of a creature that can be found year-round in certain places in the state of Indiana, but you will not see it in your own back yard. 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? As usual, you must identify the exact species. If you think it’s a species of moth, for example, go ahead and guess “luna moth” (hint: it’s not a moth). If you think you know the answer, send it in an email to thomas.berg@comcast.net. If you’re right, you’ll be entered in this issue’s prize drawing!



As mentioned, **Hornady** (www.hornady.com) has donated an excellent prize for the HOW member who guesses the right answer to this issue’s nature question. The popular RAPID Safe Night Guard makes home security for firearms and valuables easy. This is a great prize with an MSRP of \$365.00, 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.

BoatUS and Savvy Navvy Collaborate To Improve Boat Safety Across the USA

Springfield, VA – With grounding incidents among the leading causes of on-water assistance calls in the United States, BoatUS and navigation technology company Savvy Navvy are thrilled to announce a partnership for recreational boaters to navigate more safely and confidently.

The partnership aims to address critical skills gaps, particularly among newer boaters who may lack experience with chart reading, tidal patterns, and route planning. Savvy Navvy – often referred to as “Google Maps for boats” – delivers an intuitive, all-in-one app that helps boaters plan safer routes with ease. Earlier this year, Savvy Navvy launched new features including NMEA Connect, which seamlessly integrates NMEA-enabled boat instruments with the app, providing real-time data and enhanced AIS visibility.

BoatUS, the Boat Owners Association of The United States, is the nation's leading advocacy, services and safety group for recreational boaters. Providing on-water towing assistance to its members, this new partnership will enable its 740,000 members with a discount on a Savvy Navvy Premium account, providing enhanced access and functionalities for safer navigation.



“BoatUS does great work for its members, and its mission to eliminate preventable recreational boating accidents aligns perfectly with why we founded Savvy Navvy. As a leader in digital navigation, we firmly believe in formal training, understanding navigation, and knowing what’s going on in the background while the app is doing the heavy lifting. With human error and inexperience behind so many on-water incidents, this partnership enables more boaters to access Savvy Navvy, enhancing safety and peace of mind whilst out on the water,” says David Cusworth, Head of Partnership and Innovation at Savvy Navvy.

“We’re excited to partner with Savvy Navvy and offer our members a discounted rate to access the Savvy Navvy navigational app,” said Elio Betty, Director of Partnerships at BoatUS. “Our hope is to connect our members with a seamless navigational experience when on the water and ensure our members reach their destination safely.”

To become a member of BoatUS for only \$25 annually and enjoy benefits such as the Savvy Navvy Premium Account, a subscription to BoatUS Magazine, complimentary DSC-VHF radio registration, discounts on marina fuel, transient slips, repairs and more, visit www.BoatUS.com/Membership.

Unlike other navigation solutions, Savvy Navvy provides smart routing, giving users the optimal route and dynamic ETAs based on real-time data: departure time, chart information, weather conditions, tide, boat specifications, and local regulations. With more than 3 million downloads worldwide, the United States continues to be one of Savvy Navvy’s fastest growing markets. For more information, visit www.savvy-navvy.com. For more info about BoatUS, please visit www.BoatUS.com.



Media contact:

Alisha Sheth, BoatUS PR Manager, email: alisha@boatus.com.

HOW Supporting Member News

Hornady Dangerous Game Series Ammunition Sets the Bar Extremely High for Serious Hunters

Grand Island, NE – Hornady®'s Dangerous Game™ Series .450-400 Nitro Express 400 Grain Centerfire Rifle Ammo continues to push the limits with yet another incredible round offering from an industry leader. Hornady Dangerous Game Series Ammunition is manufactured using the finest components under strict quality control guidelines and measurements. Tailored to meet the needs of serious hunters, Hornady's techniques even rival hand loads with their consistency in manufacturing. Each cartridge earns the claim of accurate, reliable, and achieves excellent terminal ballistics.

- Dangerous Game Solid bullet
- Tailored to meet needs of serious hunters
- Excellent consistency in manufacturing
- Accurate
- Reliable
- Excellent terminal ballistics

For media inquiries, please contact:

Seth Swerczek

Marketing Communications Manager, email: pr@hornady.com.

For more information, please visit: www.hornady.com.



DANGEROUS GAME™ SERIES

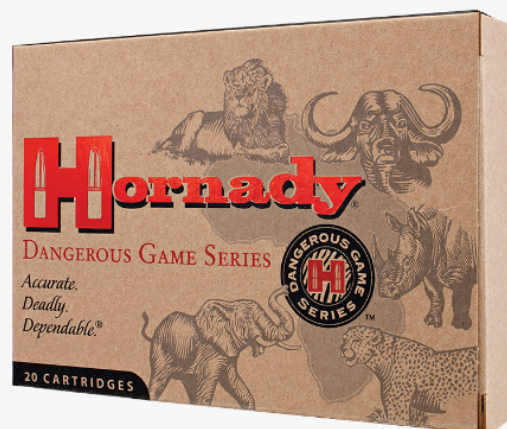
Hornady.com » [Ammunition](#) » [Dangerous Game™ Series](#)

Fear **no evil.**

Hornady® manufactures Dangerous Game™ Series ammunition with only the finest components, under strict quality control measures. Our classic bullet designs are tailored to meet the needs of the serious safari hunter.

We use techniques and processes that rival hand loads, with the ultimate goal of making every cartridge accurate, deadly and dependable!

[FIND A RETAILER](#) ➔



HOW Supporting Member News

HHAUSA 3D Archery Shoot Tour Set For Wisconsin Locations in 2026

Wisconsin Rapids, WI – The dates are set for the biggest events in our history. The first event for the 2026 HHAUSA 3D Archery Shoot Tour is set for April 18 in Barneveld, WI. The tour will then continue in June, July and August.

Our mission is to show appreciation and create a sense of community for veterans, active military and first responders through archery and the outdoors. Pre-registration for the tour kicks off in January and we can't wait to share all the details with you for these shoots next month.

INSPIRED BY THE CREATION OF OUR MILITARY DISCOUNT PROGRAM, OPERATION HHAUSA WAS LAUNCHED ON VETERANS DAY IN THE FALL OF 2016.

HHA USA empowers communities to directly support veterans, law enforcement and first responders by providing essential resources and fostering a sense of belonging. By joining our mission, you become a vital part of restoring dignity and hope to those who bravely served our nation. Through HHA USA and the power of the archery community, we can build a better future for all.

Check it out at: <https://www.hhausa.org/>

Who's coming to Wisconsin in 2026?

For media inquiries or more info, please contact:

Chris Hamm
Co-Owner and VP of Operations
Phone: 800-548-7812,
email: chris@hhasports.com.

For additional information,
please visit: www.hhasports.com.



A vertical poster for the HHAUSA 3D Archery Shoot Tour 2026. The left side features the text 'HHAUSA' in large white letters on a dark green background, with '3D ARCHERY SHOOT TOUR' written vertically in white on a lighter green background. Below this is the 'OPERATION HHA USA' logo and the 'Centershot BLUE' logo. The right side is white and lists the 2026 events: April 18th at Deer Valley Golf Course in Barneveld, WI; June 6th at God's Country Stick n' String in Norwalk, WI; July 25th at Blackhawk Archers of Stevens Point; and August 22nd at De Pere Sportsman's Club. At the bottom, it says 'SPONSORED BY SCHEELS' in red and black text.

HOW Supporting Member News

Mossberg® Adds 940 Pro Waterfowl Shotgun in Realtree® Legacy®

North Haven, CT – Launched in 2021, the Mossberg 940 Pro Waterfowl 12-gauge autoloaders are field-proven shotguns built for the extremes. For 2025 the 940 Pro Waterfowl is continuing on with an optic-ready receiver cut to accept direct mounting of micro-dot optics (RMSc-pattern), while also becoming available fully finished in Realtree's Legacy® pattern.

The 940 Pro Waterfowl Series is engineered for the wet, cold, and dirty conditions waterfowlers face. Key features include weather-resistant Cerakote® metal surfaces; 28-inch chrome-lined barrels with HIVIZ® CompSight® fiber-optic front sights; durable synthetic, self-draining stocks and forends; and nickel-boron coatings on several internal components (gas piston, magazine tube, hammer, sear, and return spring tube). The design also incorporates stainless steel rings and a hard-anodized aluminum return spring plunger for long life and low maintenance.

Built to run reliably in the field, the 940 Pro's gas system can operate up to 1,500 rounds before cleaning and will cycle factory-manufactured 2.75" or 3" loads of 1 1/8 oz. or greater (to what is currently available on the market at the time of this press release). Ergonomic, hunter-friendly features include an oversized, beveled



Optic-Ready Convenience. An innovative patent-pending cut receiver accepts direct mounting of Shield RMSc-pattern micro dots. An easy-to-install cover plate is included for when an optic is not in use. Additional adapter plates are included for mounting popular Trijicon RMR, Docter, and Leupold footprint optics. (Micro dot optic shown, not included).



Optic-Ready 940 Pro Waterfowl Semi-Autos feature patent-pending receiver cuts that accept low-profile direct mounting of Shield RMSc-pattern micro dot sights, for improved eye alignment and target acquisition. Additional adapter plates are included for mounting popular Trijicon RMR, Docter and Leupold footprint optics. Inside, a durable gas system allows longer intervals between cleanings, and a host of corrosion-resistant internal parts (boron-nitride coated gas piston, magazine tube, hammer and sear, return spring tube; chrome-lined chamber and bore; and a stainless steel return spring — provide extra protection for the muddiest, wettest conditions. Outside, this 940 Pro waterfowl gun boasts new Realtree® Legacy camo for visual cover, an adjustable LOP self-draining stock, plus a front fiber optic sight and ported, extended choke tube to put pellets right where they are needed.



Adjustable, Self-Draining Stock is user-adjustable for LOP (1.25" range); cast and drop at comb using incremental stock shims. Aggressive Mossberg signature texturing adorns the grip and slim, ergonomic forend.

Cleaner-Running Gas System. A redesigned gas system allows faster, more reliable cycling at greater cleaning intervals, and holds up season-after-season.

Bold & Functional. An oversized and contoured charging handle and bolt release provide quick manipulation.

Premium Coatings/Finishing. Specially-coated parts and extra finishing (see list above) team for added corrosion protection and performance; while chrome-lined barrels and a stainless steel return spring increase reliability in wet environments.

Built for the Rigors of Waterfowling. An enlarged and beveled loading port was designed for ease of loading; features an anodized bright orange follower, and an elongated, pinch-free elevator.

Keeping Hunters on Target. HIVIZ® CompSight front fiber optic sights and Accu-Choke™ compatible X-Factor™ ported choke tubes come standard.

loading port with a redesigned elevator and shell catch for pinch-free loading; a barrel manufacturing process that preserves point-of-aim and impact; a slim-profile forend; and a user-configurable stock with adjustable length-of-pull (13–14.25"), drop and cast options. Large charging handle and paddle-style bolt release controls make operation fast and intuitive in cold or gloved hands. When optics aren't mounted, a cover plate is included

(continued on next page)

HOW Supporting Member News

to preserve a sealed receiver.

940 Pro Waterfowl Optic Ready Realtree (Model 85186) — This optic-ready 12-gauge, 3-inch autoloader features a 28" AccuChoke™-compatible vent-rib barrel and an extended X-Factor™ Modified choke plus flush Full and Improved Cylinder chokes. Metal surfaces (receiver and barrel), stock and forend wear the Realtree® Legacy camo pattern. The package includes Mossberg's aggressive signature texturing on stock and forend, sling swivel studs, 5-round capacity, drilled+tapped/optic-cut receiver and ambidextrous safety. MSRP: \$1,246.

Mossberg 940 Pro Waterfowl Autoloading Shotgun Specifications:

Item Number:	85186
Type:	940 Pro Semi-Auto
Gauge/Chamber:	12 GA, 3 in
Cap. (2.75in):	5 + 1
Barrel/Finish:	28 in. Realtree Legacy
Sights:	HIVIZ CompSight Fiber Optic
Chokes:	X-Factor Extended (AccuChoke)
Overall Length:	48.75 in
LOP:	13-14.25 in
Stock/Finish:	Variable LOP Synthetic Stock, Realtree Legacy
Approx Weight:	7.75 lbs

HALO Waterfowl Partnership — Exclusive Waterfowl Gun for 2025–2026

Mossberg is proud to announce that the 940 Pro Waterfowl will be the only waterfowl shotgun used and promoted by HALO Waterfowl across their digital and event channels for the 2025–2026 season. Throughout the season the 940 Pro Waterfowl will be featured in HALO's social content, product spotlights, event activations, and sponsored programming – bringing Mossberg performance directly to the HALO community of hunters and outdoors enthusiasts.

HALO Waterfowl is a lifestyle and hunting brand founded by industry insiders who built the company around technical hunting apparel and authentic field experience. The brand operates a retail store and direct-to-consumer site, attends live hunting events and expos, and partners with a range of industry sponsors and collaborators. HALO's roots in Georgia and its focus on practical, field-tested hunting gear have helped it cultivate a dedicated following among waterfowl hunters and outdoorsmen.

Realtree® and Legacy® are registered trademarks of Jordan Outdoors Enterprises, Ltd. HIVIZ® and CompSight® are registered trademarks of HIVIZ, LLC. HALO Waterfowl is a trademark of HALO Waterfowl, LLC.

MEDIA CONTACT:

Richard Kirk, Senior Director of Marketing
Email: rkirk@mossberg.com, phone: +1 (203) 230-5349.
For more information, please visit: www.mossberg.com.



Safety and safe firearms handling is everyone's responsibility.

HOW's Supporting Member Websites

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

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

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

Hoosier Outdoor Writers

Application For New Membership

(Check Desired Classification below)

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

Personal Information:

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

Professional Information:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Signature: _____

Sponsor: _____

Who We Are

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

What We Do

These are the purposes of HOW:

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

What We Stand For

These are what we strive to accomplish:

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

Membership Requirements

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

1. Active

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



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

2. Associate

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

3. Supporting

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

4. Active Student

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

5. Associate Student

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

Calendar of Events

ATA Show Week 2026:

(<http://ATAshow.com>)

Indianapolis, IN

January 6-11, 2026

SHOT Show 2026:

(<http://shotshow.org>)

Las Vegas, NV

January 20-23, 2026

NWTF 2026 Convention and Sport Show:

(www.nwtf.org)

Nashville, TN

February 12-14, 2026

SCI 2026 Convention:

(<https://convention.safariclub.org/>)

Nashville, TN

February 18-21, 2026

Ford Indianapolis Boat, Sport & Travel Show:

(www.IndySportShow.com)

Indianapolis, IN

February 20-22 & 25-March 1, 2026

Indiana Deer, Turkey & Waterfowl Expo:

(www.IndySportShow.com)

Indianapolis, IN

February 27-March 1, 2026

HOW 2025 Annual Conference:

(www.HoosierOutdoorWriters.org)

Potawatomi Inn, Pokagon State Park

Angola, IN

April 10-12, 2026

(Annual meeting on April 11)

NRA 2026 Annual Meeting and Exhibits:

(www.nraam.org)

Houston, TX

April 16-19, 2026

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