

HUNTING & FISHING

Wednesday, March 27 & Thursday, March 28, 2024
12 pages • Special Supplement



Keeping an Eye on Nature

Sparta native reveals his passion for the outdoors

By **BENNY MAILMAN**
Herald Editor

Many folks here in Monroe County are gearing up for the upcoming hunting and fishing seasons, here in Wisconsin. While the hunters, fishermen and fisherwomen are doling out dollars for proper camouflage clothing and blinds, rods and reels, licenses and permits, and hooks and bullets, the seasons themselves are doling out dopamine drops by the dozens to enthusiastic sportsmen and women.

An estimated 895,000 people hunt in Wisconsin each year, with 553,479 licenses being issued for gun-deer hunting, in 2023 alone. When you broach the figures for fishing in Wisconsin, the numbers are a staggering 1.4 million, or 1 in 3 of all Wisconsin residents, according to the fisheries staff, at Wisconsin.gov

Pat Howard was born and raised in Monroe County, specifically in Sparta. Howard resides in Onalaska now, but his parents, Harley and Betty Howard, own acreage in Little Falls, so he still has access to the wonderment and beauty of Monroe County.

To say that Howard is an avid hunter would be a gross understatement of his talents and expertise. Sportsman more accurately depicts his love, not only for the thrill of the hunt and fishing alone, but his enjoyment of the environment; his gratitude for the land; and his optimism for opportunities in digitally capturing the magical world of Monroe County wildlife.

One of the areas that Howard has become proficient in over the years, is the trail camera. Howard's strong promotion of Reveal's Tactacam prompted the company to call him up two and a half years ago and say, "You do



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TACTACAM



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ABOVE A family of foxes leaps from a mound in March. **BELOW** Jennifer Zeps and Pat Howard pose with a pair of turkey toms. Contributed photos.

so much promoting for us, and we have not been paying you, so you might as well come and work for us" — so he did.

Howard presented an unsolicited breakdown of the calendar year, as it pertains to the cameras in conjunction with the hunting seasons and neutral zones, or breaks between hunting. The mere fact that Howard casually commented on the camera calendar is a testament to how hunting, wildlife, and all aspects of nature are a matter-of-fact conversation piece for Howard.

"When we are checking the cameras in January, we are looking

to see what bucks have survived the [hunting] seasons. For January going into February and March, we are checking for antler sheds of the bucks." When pressed by the Herald on the significance of knowing when the antlers are shed by the bucks, Howard's laughing response was, "So we can go look for them."

Howard continued into the camera calendar with March, April, and May. "These months are about turkeys, geese, swans, and cranes," he stated. "As heavy as I am into hunting and fishing,

'NATURE'
cont. on pg. 8



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**STOP IN
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DNR publishes new fishing regulations for 2024-25 season

Contributed by WI DNR

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) 2024–2025 Guide To Wisconsin's Fishing Regulations, is now available online.

These regulations, which include changes to walleye/sauger bag limits on inland waters and new registration rules for small tournaments, will go into effect on April 1st, 2024.

With a week to go, before these regulations kick in, now is the perfect time for anglers to review the season dates; any special regulations; and the daily bag and size limits for their favorite fishing spots around the state. All license requirements apply.

All residents and non-residents over 16 must have a 2024 – 2025 general fishing license, to fish in Wisconsin. Annual resident licenses cost \$20 each or purchase a spousal license for \$31, so you and your spouse can fish together. All fishing licenses and stamps can be purchased online via Go Wild, at a registered sales location or at DNR Service Centers.

You can find these general fishing regulations, as well as the trout fishing regulations, online and at locations where licenses are sold.

What's New In 2024 – 25?

Several new regulations and changes to bag limits have been implemented this year. These changes include:

- A new small tournament registration requirement.
- Statewide daily bag limit of three walleye/sauger per day on all inland waters.
- Walleye bag limits for the Great Lakes (including Green Bay) and Wisconsin-Iowa, Wisconsin-Minnesota and Wisconsin-Michigan boundary waters will remain unchanged, as will limits on any water with a bag limit currently lower than three.
- A person may harvest walleye from two different lakes or rivers with a three-fish daily bag limit as long as they don't exceed the five-fish total daily bag limit.
- A daily bag limit of 10 panfish in Lake Mendota in Dane County.
- Changing the musky minimum

length limit to 50 inches on the Wisconsin River, from the Lake DuBay Dam upstream to the first dam in Merrill.

- Creating an urban fishing pond in the Village of Suamico in Brown County.

- New bag and length limits have also been enacted for specific waterbodies in Brown, Chippewa, Dane, Dunn, Eau Claire, Iowa, Iron, Lincoln, Manitowoc, Marathon, Marquette, Oconto, Pierce, Polk, Portage, Price, Rusk, Sauk, Sawyer, St. Croix, Taylor, Vilas, Walworth, Waukesha, and Waushara counties. Anglers can find a full list of the 2024 – 2025 fishing regulation changes on the DNR's fishing regulations webpage.

As you hit the water this spring, you are reminded to disinfect your gear and follow these guidelines to help prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species:

- Inspect your boat, trailer and equipment.
- Remove any attached aquatic plants or animals (before launching, after loading and before transporting on a public highway).

2024-2025 FISHING SEASON DATES

Effective Date: April 1, 2024;

Early Inland Trout (catch and release)
January 6 (5 a.m.) - May 3

General Inland Trout
May 4 (5 a.m.) - Oct. 15

General Inland Fishing
May 4 - March 2, 2025

Largemouth Bass Northern Zone Harvest
May 4 - March 2, 2025

Smallmouth Bass Northern Zone Harvest
June 15 - March 2, 2025

Large And Smallmouth Bass Southern Zone Harvest
May 4 - March 2, 2025

Large And Smallmouth Bass Catch And Release
At all other times of the year.

Musky Northern Zone Harvest
May 25 - Dec. 31

Musky Southern Zone Harvest
May 4 - Dec. 31

Northern Pike
May 4 - March 2, 2025

Walleye
May 4 - March 2, 2025

Lake Sturgeon
Feb. 10 - Feb. 25 (spearing)
Sept. 7 - Sept. 30 (hook-and-line)

Free Fishing Weekends
Jan. 20-21, 2024
June 1-2, 2024

- Drain all water from boats, motors and all equipment.

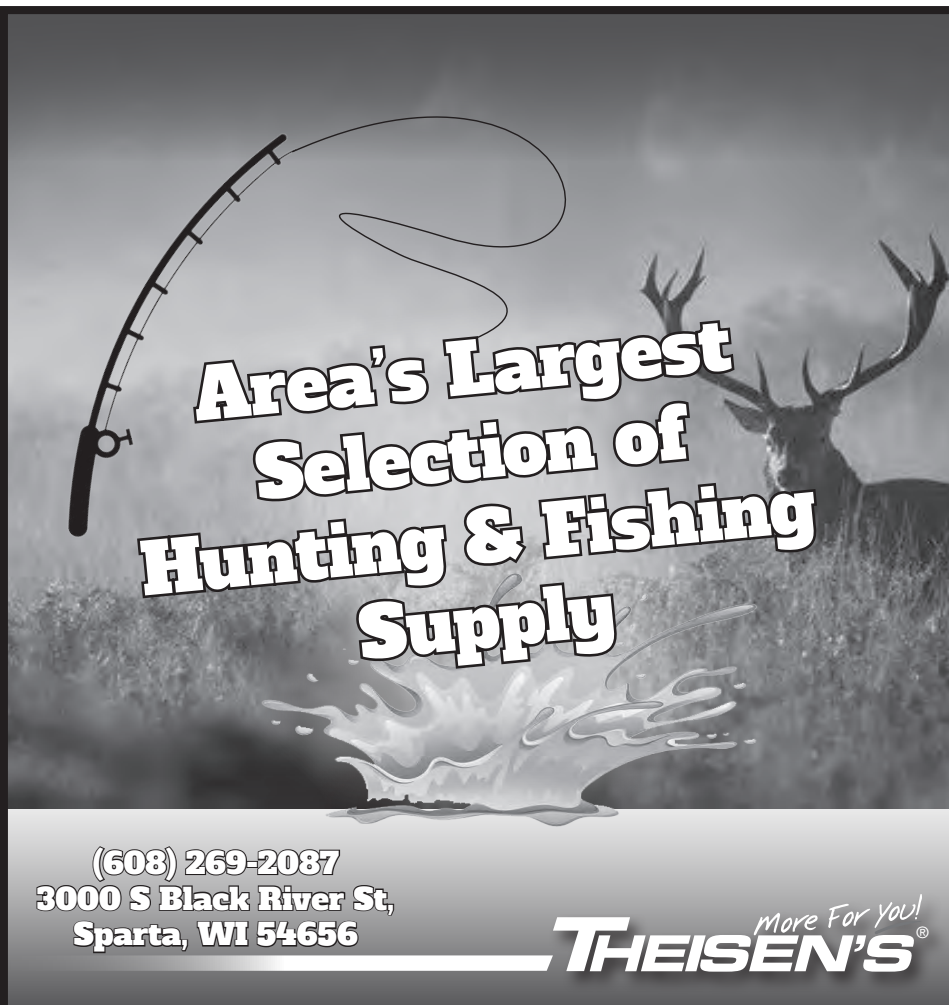
- Never move live fish away from a waterbody.

- Dispose of unwanted bait in the trash.

- Purchase any minnows from a Wisconsin bait dealer. Please note

that anglers may take leftover minnows away from any state water and use them again on that same body of water.

- Leftover minnows may be used on other waters only if no lake or river water or other fish were added to their container.



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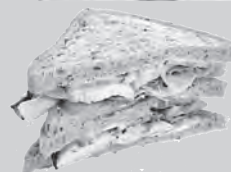


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Bonus harvest authorizations for Spring Turkey Season available March 18th

Contributed by WI DNR

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) will begin selling bonus harvest authorizations for the 2024 spring turkey season, on Monday, March 18th, with a designated sale date for each zone.

Previously known as leftover permits, bonus harvest authorizations will be available online through the Go Wild license portal and at all license sales agents. Sales begin at 10 a.m. and run through midnight each day. Both hunters who missed the spring turkey drawing deadline last December and those seeking additional harvest authorizations may purchase bonus authorizations at this time.

Bonus harvest authorizations are \$10 for residents and \$15 for non-residents. Both residents and non-residents have equal opportunities to purchase authorizations. Each zone will have a designated sale date. Hunters can purchase bonus authorizations at a rate of one per day, until the zone and time period are sold out, or until the season closes. Bonus harvest authorization purchases will not affect preference point status for future spring drawings.

Hunters are encouraged to check the turkey zone map and spring turkey bonus harvest authorization availability, to see if harvest authorizations are available for the time period and zone they intend to hunt.

Additionally, the DNR recommends turkey hunters interested in purchasing a Conservation Patron license for the 2024 - 2025 season do so, before March 18th, to make the bonus harvest authorization process as quick and easy as possible.

The scheduled sale dates for the 2024 spring turkey bonus harvest authorizations are:

Zone 1: Monday, March 18
Zone 2: Tuesday, March 19
Zone 3: Wednesday, March 20
Zone 4: Thursday, March 21
Zone 5: Friday, March 22
Zone 6: No bonus authorizations available
Zone 7: Friday, March 22

Any remaining bonus authorizations will go on sale on Saturday, March 23rd, at 10 a.m.

The Go Wild system will use an online queue to randomly assign numbers to customers who enter the site between 9:45 a.m. and 10 a.m. each day. There is no advantage to entering the site before 9:45 a.m. Customers who join after 10 a.m. will enter the queue in the order of arrival.

All spring turkey hunters must have a valid spring turkey license, a 2024 wild turkey stamp and a valid turkey harvest authorization. If they have not already done so, hunters must purchase their spring turkey license and stamp authorization when purchasing a bonus harvest authorization.

The spring turkey season is comprised of six distinct periods, each seven days long and running Wednesday through the following Tuesday. A total of seven zones will be open for turkey hunting in 2024. The 2024 spring turkey season dates are as follows:

YOUTH HUNT: April 13 - 14
Period A: April 17 - 23
Period B: April 24 - 30
Period C: May 1 - 7
Period D: May 8 - 14
Period E: May 15 - 21
Period F: May 22 - 28

For more information regarding turkey hunting in Wisconsin, visit the DNR's Turkey Hunting and Management webpage.

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NATURE

Continued from pg. 2

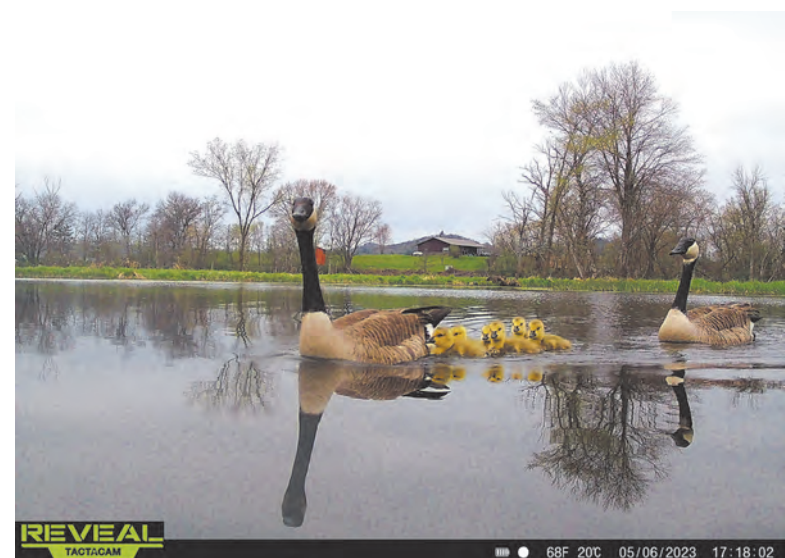
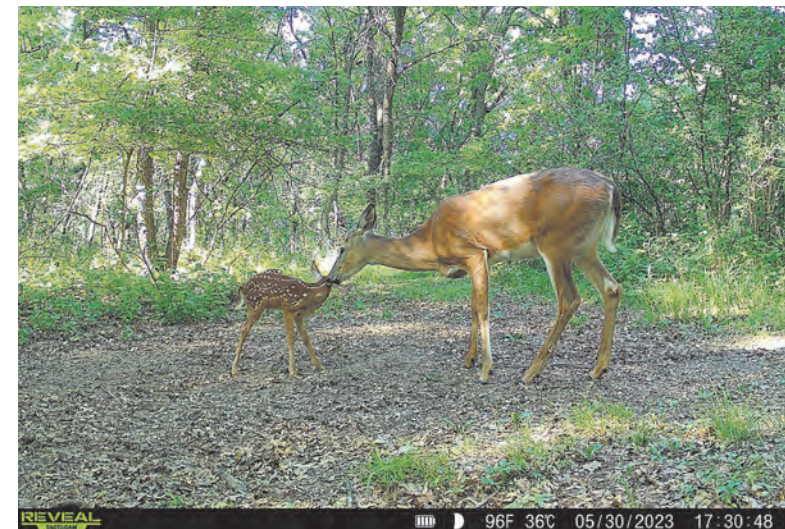
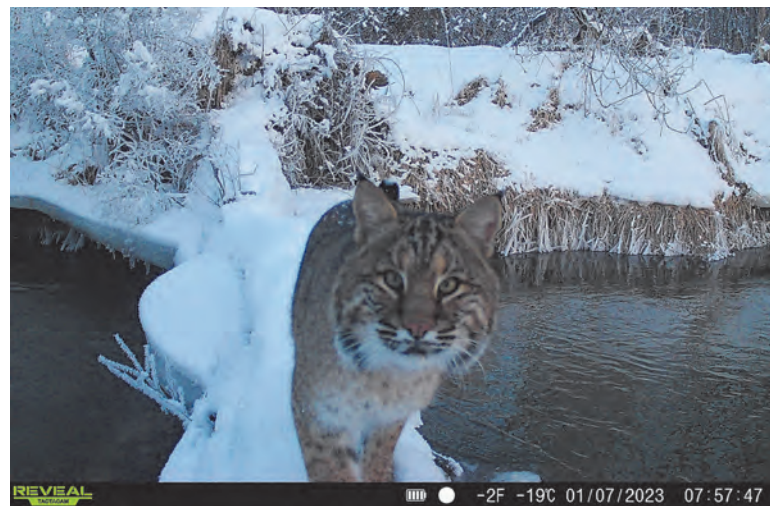
I have developed a passion for remote photography, especially with swans, cranes, and eagles. This passion helps to fill the gaps between hunting seasons. Because of my obsession with waterfowl photos, my peers have given me the nickname 'Aqua man.' The truth is that I want to spend as much time in the woods as I can, and this photography venture allows me to meet my being-outdoors quota."

Howard then stated that in May, the fawns start to drop, and that it is really fun to see the new guests walking in the forest. For the next few months, June, July, and August, Howard informed the Herald that it is a time to watch the fawns grow. As well, the bucks are now growing out their antlers. "I am anxious to check the cameras during these seasons as well," Howard said. "Because now you see the yearly growth and improvement of the bucks lurking around in your neck of the woods. The antlers are covered in velvet, and that is a special gift to witness from nature. We see the continuing of that gift, through the photos of the bucks rubbing off the velvet, through buck rubs on trees."

Howard says that because September and October are hunting months, cameras are concentrated on food plots and acorn trees, as well as waterholes. "This is where we channel our inner Sherlock Holmes and start piecing patterns together, so that we may figure out when and where we can position ourselves to get that big buck."

Howard informed the Herald that the digital photos provide an accurate log, as to where the game was, at what time, and even what the weather was like. "On the cell camera app (Reveal), you can save the bucks to a gallery, click on weather statistics and it tells you where the wind was blowing, and if it is a NW wind, where the buck is most likely to be. It breaks it all down, really good." In the Google Play App, it can be found as Tactacam REVEAL.

Howard had lived for a while out of the state of Wisconsin, nearly four years, between Kentucky and Iowa, but moved back to appease his healthy appetite for ice fishing. With the oddness and quick fluctuations of temperature this year, Howard said that there were actually only three days where it was safe to ice fish. "This year [for ice fishing] has been disappointing," Howard stated, in a lower toned and dismal voice. "My favorite thing to do is ice fish. We had one week of



A collection of photos from throughout the year taken with REVEAL Tactacams. Contributed photos.

frigid temperatures that lead to only three days of solid ice; then we were right back to 50 degrees and rain."

To add company to the misery, the three days of ice-fishable ice were a Monday through Wednesday time period — days

that Howard had to work.

But checking for new movement in nature keeps Howard busy. He estimates that he checks around 350 cameras.

"My boss and I keep track of all these cameras, on four separate land parcels. In a month, I am

going through nearly a million photos. To say that out loud makes me realize how insane that is."

Howard says that he looks at most of these photos on his phone, and a majority of the rest on his tablet. He says that mostly the photos are used for tracking and

keeping tabs on animals that are on the land, as well as their habits and travel patterns. "We also do a calendar each year. It is tough to choose the twelve best photos. I

'NATURE'
cont. on pg. 11

Must-have hunting gear

Hunting is popular throughout North America. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service said that 40 percent of the population of the United States ages 16 and older participated in wildlife-related activities in 2016, the most recent year for data. Hunting also is popular in Canada, where it's difficult to paint a picture of that popularity because hunting is regulated at the provincial level. However, Wild Alberta reports that, in 2020, there were 151,724 resident hunters in Alberta alone.

As is the case with many hobbies and pastimes, hunting requires some unique gear. Hunters need to bring some essential gear along on each trip to ensure their safety, while other gear and gadgets are all about convenience.

• **Proper clothing:** Hunting clothing comes in two main varieties: camouflage and blaze orange. Camo patterns mimic real-life foliage or use a digital pattern of natural colors to trick the animals' eyes, preventing them from detecting the hunters'

outlines. Blaze orange hunting gear, from coats to hats to coveralls, is designed to make hunters visible to other hunters. Some game, like whitetail deer, cannot detect the orange color spectrum, so hunters need not worry that they will be compromising their hunting efforts. Depending on the hunting area and its specific regulations, camo or orange clothing will be required. Hunting clothing also should be comfortable for the weather and the conditions. Waterproof or water-resistant clothing can protect hunters from the elements as well. In cold climates, layer up and wear insulated materials.

• **Weapon and ammo:** Hunters should always look for ammunition details for the animals they will be hunting so they choose the correct weapon and ammunition type. Weapons should be maintained and cleaned for safety, and all hunters should consider taking a course in the proper handling of weapons.

'GEAR'
cont. on pg. 12

No boat? Try these 5 tips for successful shore fishing

No boat? No problem! Shore fishing offers a rewarding alternative for anglers without access to a boat. Maximize your success with these five tips:

1. **Pick the best spot.** Research and choose fishing spots with accessible shorelines. Consider factors like water depth, structures and potential fish habitats. Parks, docks and riverbanks are promising locations.

2. **Get the timing down.** Fish are often more active during specific times of the day. Early mornings and late evenings tend to be the most promising times because fish are closer to the shore in search of food.

3. **Use the right bait and lures.** Tailor your bait and lures to the local fish species

and their feeding habits. Experiment with a variety of options, including live bait, soft plastics and crankbaits.

4. **Stay mobile.** If the fish aren't biting in one spot, move along the shoreline to find more promising areas. Be observant of changes in water conditions and adapt your strategy accordingly.

5. **Mind the weather.** Fish tend to be more active before a front moves in. Overcast days can also be advantageous, as fish often venture closer to the shore in these conditions.

Additionally, fishing on the windward side of a body of water can increase your chances of finding active feeding areas and improve your overall success.



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2024 WISCONSIN WILD TURKEY UPDATE

UPCOMING: SPRING 2024 TURKEY SEASON



The spring turkey season consists of six 7-day time periods (A-F) that run from Wednesday to the following Tuesday with a 2-day youth hunt the weekend before the start of the season. There are 7 turkey management zones (1-7) throughout the state. Harvest authorizations are specific to a time period and zone and are issued through a preference-based drawing (see page 2 for more information). Only male or bearded turkeys can be harvested in the spring.

2024 Spring Turkey Season

Youth: April 13-14

Period A: April 17-23

Period D: May 8-14

Period B: April 24-30

Period E: May 15-21

Period C: May 1-7

Period F: May 22-28

For the 2024 spring season, 246,068 harvest authorizations were available, 139,931 of which were awarded to hunters in the drawing. The remaining bonus harvest authorizations will be sold over the counter starting March 18th. For more information, visit dnr.wi.gov and search, “spring turkey harvest authorizations.”

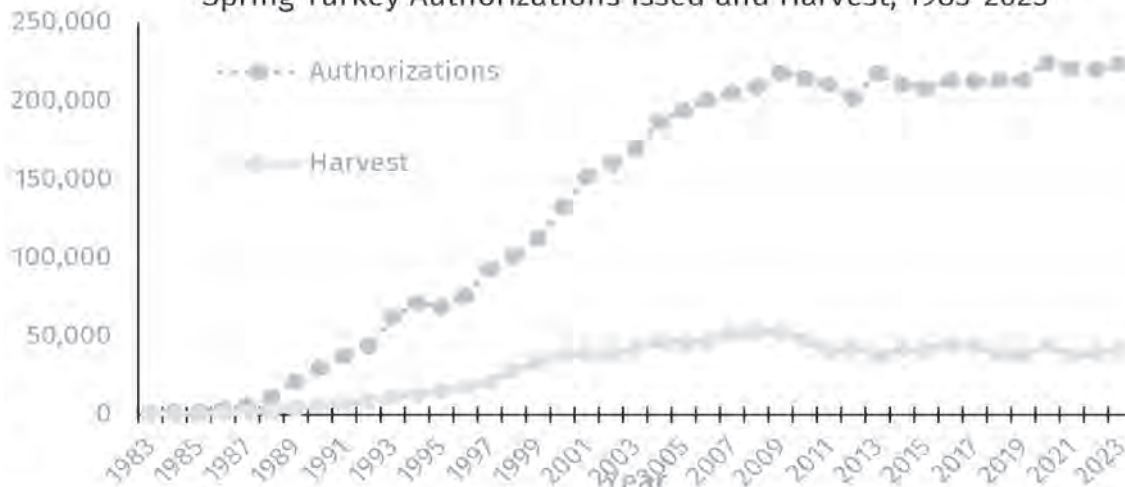
REVIEW: SPRING 2023 TURKEY SEASON

Statewide totals show that 42,439 turkeys were harvested at a 19% success rate.

Harvest was up 8% in 2023 compared to 2022. 2023 learn-to-hunt events resulted in 68 turkey harvests and the youth hunt resulted in 2,972 turkey harvests. Over all the turkeys experienced good nesting and brood rearing conditions in the spring.

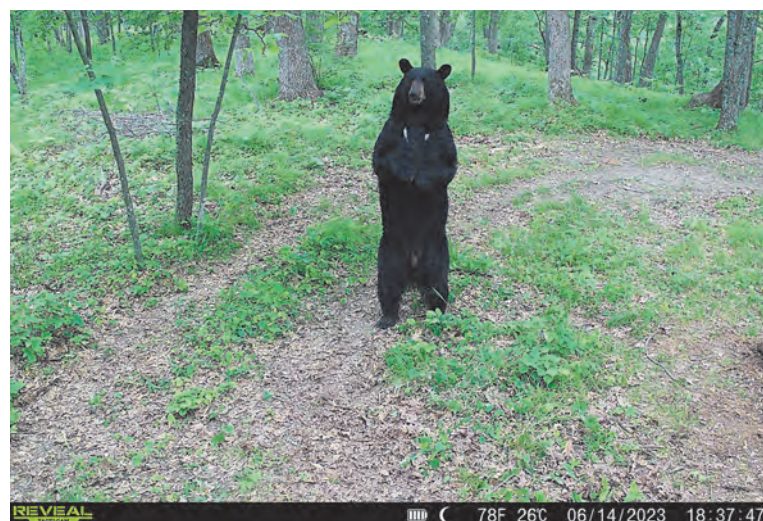
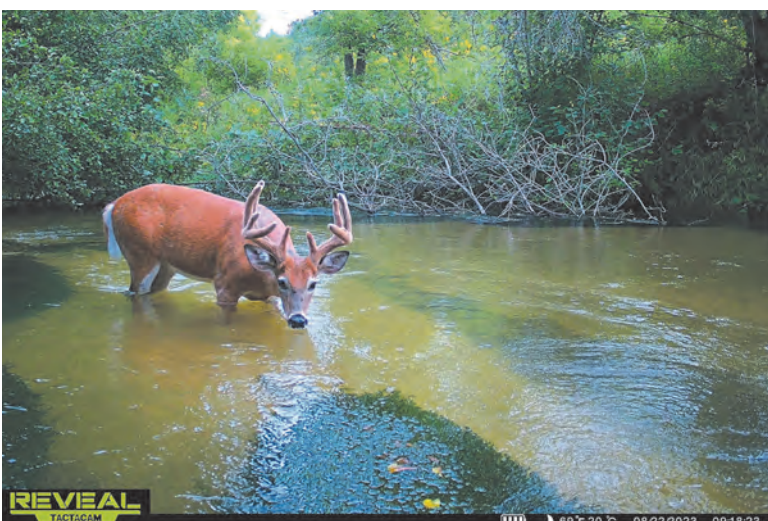
A total of 246,428 harvest authorizations were available; 144,391 were issued in the drawing and 79,112 bonus harvest authorizations were sold over the counter.

Spring Turkey Authorizations Issed and Harvest, 1983-2023



2023 Spring Turkey Season Harvest – Final

Zone	A		B		C		D		E		F		Special Hunts			Total	
	Kill	% Success	Kill	% Success	Kill	% Success	Kill	% Success	Kill	% Success	Kill	% Success	Learn to Hunt	Youth Hunt	Tribal Take	Kill	% Success
01	3,325	27%	2,092	17%	2,117	17%	1,821	15%	1,242	13%	383	13%	16	741	0	11,737	19%
02	2,302	27%	1,698	20%	1,456	17%	1,256	15%	1,530	18%	1,015	12%	14	811	0	10,082	20%
03	2,785	27%	1,921	18%	1,747	17%	1,631	16%	1,060	13%	417	14%	18	732	0	10,311	20%
04	1,390	24%	1,116	19%	882	15%	1,050	18%	1,036	18%	659	11%	16	480	0	6,629	19%
05	502	25%	364	18%	266	13%	198	10%	287	14%	208	10%	2	117	0	1,944	16%
06	265	27%	222	22%	170	17%	149	15%	126	13%	104	10%	1	64	0	1,101	18%
07	144	20%	96	13%	109	15%	76	10%	55	8%	37	5%	1	27	0	545	12%
FM	8	23%	26	39%	9	32%	31	48%	6	21%	10	48%	0	0	0	90	37%
Unks	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0%
Total	10,721	26%	7,535	18%	6,756	16%	6,212	15%	5,342	15%	2,833	12%	68	2,972	0	42,439	19.0%



A collection of photos from throughout the year taken with REVEAL Tactacams. Contributed photos.

NATURE

Continued from pg. 8

pick 100 photos, and then whittle them down to 12 ... it is not easy.”

With all the advancements in AI technology, cell phones, and digital communication, what advancements in trail cams has Howard seen?

“The very first one [trail camera] I had was actually a film camera. If you were a rookie, like I was, you would get 26 photos of a leaf blowing back and forth. You would hustle to the One Hour photo and get those 26 photos developed, and as you thumbed through them, they were of the same leaf, going back and forth.”

For Howard, where technology is today almost seems like fiction. “It is impressive that now you can just pick up your phone and the photos are right there.”

Howard then spoke to his advancement, as a photographer with trail cameras, and what his

curiosity has brought to him. “I started in 2008, wondering what deer were roaming around my hunting areas. Then I thought, ‘I wonder what else is around here?’ So, I positioned a camera on a log that was crossing a creek.”

Indeed, when the photos started rolling in from the camera focused on the log, there were many different animals utilizing nature’s makeshift bridge, to get safely across the frigid, fast-moving waters of the creek. “I wanted to see the different critters that were using the log. We saw bobcats, turkeys, coyotes, deer, racoons, possums, squirrels, fishers, and even a bear.”

With years of trail camera experience comes a curiosity for creativity. For Howard, the shots became not only about the creature that would be caught in time, but about the background scenery, shuffling the snapshot from a point of record to art.

“For me, it has turned into what I like to call remote photography,”

Howard explained. “Because now I want a picture of a wood duck, but I also want the sunset in the background, or a building, such as an old barn or a home, for the backdrop.”

Howard says that he is not too fond of gun season, but many hunters do it out of tradition. For Howard, it all has to do with the timing of the rut. “The best time [of the year] to hunt is the last five days of October and the first ten days of November ... that is where it’s at really. That falls into bow hunting territory.”

Topping the list of reasons why Howard likes this specific timeframe is not only looking for and bagging the big buck, but it encompasses what you hear and see that makes it a magical moment in the cosmos. “On a good day you will see 5 bucks chasing the same doe, or you will see the bucks fighting,” Howard started to explain. “You get to hear the bucks grunt and roar. If you have never heard a buck roar, it is

something you need to do before you die. The noises these animals make is otherworldly.”

In describing the roar of the buck, Howard says that it is like a deep growl. “And the little bucks don’t growl. So, when you hear that roar, you are like ‘Come over here big fella!’”

One common myth, according to Howard, is the bigger the tree for a buck rub, the bigger the buck. “Rather than look at the size of the tree, you should look at the height of the rub. The higher it is, the bigger the buck.”

Then Howard remarked on an interesting point. “Oddly enough, I have found a few rubs in the past few years, and I put a camera on them. I was very surprised to see how many different bucks will rub the same tree, marking it, like a scent post. ‘This is my post!’ and the next buck says, ‘No, it is mine!’ These snubs at each other’s claim on the rub is not too dissimilar from dogs peeing on tires and fire hydrants.”

The Herald interview shifted to turkeys, and Howard’s eyes lit up like a Christmas tree. “If you made me choose between the rut and Spring turkey hunting, I don’t think I could do it. The chance to hunt something that you can call to, and it talks back to you ... it is on another level. You can hear them getting closer and closer and closer, and then they are right in front of you.”

Howard hunts with a Remington 870 12 gauge. “I like them inside of 40 yards, but I’ve seen guys shoot them at 60 and 70 yards. I like to get them close.”

Howard says that when he is out West, and he is on a huge track of land, he likes to walk and call, until he gets one to answer. “Then I will set up on him. On a smaller plot of land, we find that it is better to just sit tight and let them do their thing.”

Howard said that there are many opportunities to buy a tag, and that they are only \$10 a tag, until they are gone. He also informed the Herald that when they shoot a turkey, they eat it that day. “We never put them in a freezer. We clean ‘em, kabob ‘em, and put them right on the grill that night.”

The biggest turkey Pat ever shot was 26 pounds. “To score a turkey, you measure the beard. If it has more than one beard, you measure all of them. You measure the spurs and the weight, and you get a total score. The National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTFF) has the official scoring system on their website.”

One time he shot one with two beards, while his significant other, Jennifer, shot one with three beards. “That’s \$1,000 trip to the taxidermist,” he quipped.

With four seasons in Monroe County, the Herald pressed Howard on the different types of clothing needed. “You want something that will hold your scent in,” he started out. “Because we live in Wisconsin, you need to have early season, mid-season, and late season clothing. We go from light weight, in the warmer months, to kind of warm for the Fall, and then super warm, for the biting winter temperatures.”

Howard paused for a second, and claimed, “Clothing can get expensive.”

Howard finished up by telling the Herald, “Turkeys cannot smell, so you can get away with a bit more with them over deer. Their eyesight is killer though. You don’t get away with much with the turkeys. A blind really helps out with them. That way you can play Yahtzee on your phone, or whatever, to pass the time, until the action starts.”

Fishing photography tips:

How to document your best catches this season

Capturing the thrill of your fishing adventures through photography adds an extra layer of joy to your memorable catches. Follow these tips to take stunning and ethical fishing photos:

1. Handle the fish gently.

Be gentle when holding the fish to minimize stress and potential harm. Wet your hands before touching the fish to protect its delicate slime layer. Avoid squeezing it tightly and support its weight evenly. Have your camera ready as you don't want to have the fish out of the water for more than three or four seconds at a time.

2. Use the proper holding technique.

For smaller fish, use a one-handed grip, keeping your fingers away from the gills. Larger

fish can be supported with two hands, one near the head and the other at the tail. This not only showcases the fish but also ensures its safety.

3. Make sure you're in focus.

Focus your camera on the fish's eyes. The eyes are the focal point of any living subject. If the eyes aren't in focus, chances are the rest of the fish will be blurry as well.

4. Avoid selfies. Taking a selfie with your catch is difficult and can be stressful for the fish. Ask a friend to help you get the best shot.

With these fishing photography tips, you can immortalize your best catches while respecting the well-being of the fish you release. Say cheese!



Close to home fishing

Recent studies have shown that 53% of anglers do not travel more than 30 minutes from their home.

The sites are generally found within a half hour of a DNR work station or nearby municipality and are focused more on shore fishing opportunities. Fishing is a time-honored tradition in Wisconsin. Buy your license, grab family and friends and reel in some great fishing memories.

Water	Nearest Town	County	Access	Species 1	Species 2	Species 3
Little La Crosse River	Sparta, Melvina, Cashton	Monroe	Many - see DNR TROUT TOOL https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Fishing/trout/TROUT	Brown trout		
Mill Creek	Tomah	Monroe	Several - see DNR TROUT TOOL https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Fishing/trout/TROUT	Brook trout		
Black River	Black River Falls	Jackson	From the dam in Black River Falls downstream a mile the west bank is owned by the city and publicly accessible. Access along North and South Water Streets, South First St., and Grant Street. Banks are generally steep and rocky.	Walleye	Smallmouth bass	Musky
Black River	Neillsville	Jackson	From the dam in Hatfield downstream for 1 mile the banks are owned by the DNR and Hatfield Hydropower LLC and publicly accessible. Lots of walking involved, banks can be steep and rocky, wilderness setting. Access via County Hwy K.	Smallmouth bass	Walleye	Musky
Mississippi River, Blackhawk Park	De Soto	Vernon	30 miles south of La Crosse, 3 miles north of De Soto. Take County Trunk Hwy "B" off of State Hwy 35.	Walleye	Bluegill	various
Coon Creek	Coon Valley and Chaseburg	Vernon	Many - see DNR TROUT TOOL https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Fishing/trout/TROUT	Brown trout		
Timber Coulee Creek	Westby	Vernon	Many - see DNR TROUT TOOL https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Fishing/trout/TROUT	Brown trout		
Bishops Branch	Viroqua	Vernon	Many - see DNR TROUT TOOL https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Fishing/trout/TROUT	Brown trout		
Mississippi River, Pettibone Lagoon	La Crosse	La Crosse	Pettibone Lagoon, located in Pettibone Park, off the causeway between La Crosse and La Cresecant, MN	Bluegill	Largemouth bass	Crappie
Mississippi River, Green Island Park	La Crosse	La Crosse	Green Island Park, on the S. side of La Crosse, Take 7th St behind Gundersen Medical Center. Adjacent to the Green Island Boat Landing	Walleye	Sauger	Catfish
Mississippi River, Copeland Park, Black R. Channel	La Crosse	La Crosse	Copeland Park E and Copeland Park W. Park at boat landings.	Largemouth bass	Yellow perch	White & Yellow bass
Mississippi River, Gundersen Lutheran walking trail	La Crosse	La Crosse	On the S side of La Crosse behind Gundersen Medical Center. Take 7th St behind Gundersen Medical Center. Look for walking trail signs.	Largemouth bass	Bluegill	Black crappie
Mississippi River, Nelson Park, French Island	La Crosse	La Crosse	On the N tip of French Island, near the airport, in Town of Campbell. Head towards airport, go left on Fanta Reed Rd., then N on Lakeshore Dr.	Bluegill	Largemouth bass	Yellow perch
Mississippi River, Riverside Park	La Crosse	La Crosse	In downtown La Crosse, go W on State St. until come to Mississippi R.	Walleye	Sauger	Catfish
Mississippi River, Goose Island County Park	La Crosse	La Crosse	Goose Island County Park, located 4 miles S of La Crosse. Take Hwy 35 S of La Crosse, go W on County Hwy G1. Opens April 15.	Walleye	Bluegill	various
Mormon Coulee Creek	La Crosse	La Crosse	Many - see DNR TROUT TOOL https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Fishing/trout/TROUT	Brown trout		

GEAR

Continued from pg. 9

- **Knife:** Knives are a staple for every hunting trip and can be used for multiple purposes. Most hunters prefer a dedicated knife for field dressing the animal, which includes gutting, boning, skinning, and butchering. Some knives fold and others are fixed blades.

- **Legal documents:** Hunters should always carry their hunting licenses and have game tags on hand to mark their kills appropriately. Depending on where one lives and hunts, licenses may need to be visible on the person.

- **Calls and scents:** It may be possible to lure game closer with special calls or scents. In addition, hunters may want to utilize scent killers, which are sprays and washes that remove human scents from clothing and gear so game are unaware that hunters are present.

- **Binoculars:** While one may be able to use the scope on a weapon to spot game, binoculars are more efficient.

- **First aid kit and other safety gear:** Hunters should stock a first aid kit, emergency phone, water and snacks to stay hydrated and fed, and a foldable paper map in the event cell phone signals fade or prove unreliable.

Hunting requires patience, dedication and essential gear. With the right supplies, a hunting venture is that much more enjoyable.