

# Wisconsin Natural Resources

THE WISCONSIN DNR'S GUIDE TO THE OUTDOORS | WNRMAG.COM

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## THE POWER OF FIRE

HOW  
WILDFIRES  
START AND  
STEPS FOR  
PREVENTION

MEET THE WOMEN  
IN FORESTRY

KEEP WILDLIFE WILD

OJIBWE SPRING  
HARVEST SEASON

'WEEDS' THAT DO GOOD

MILWAUKEE DAY TRIPS

SPRING 2022 | 3.50



# OPENING SHOT



LINDA FRESHWATERS ARNDT

Rose-breasted grosbeak



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PUBL-OC-021  
ISSN-0736-2277

Wisconsin Natural Resources magazine (USPS #34625000) is published quarterly in Spring, Summer, Fall and Winter by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. The magazine is sustained through paid subscriptions. No tax money is used. Preferred Periodicals postage paid at Madison, WI. POSTMASTER and readers: Subscription questions and address changes should be sent to Wisconsin Natural Resources, P.O. Box 37832, Boone, IA 50037-0832. **Subscription rates are: \$8.97 for one year, \$15.97 for two years and \$21.97 for three years.** Toll-free subscription inquiries will be answered at 1-800-678-9472.

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Governor Tony Evers

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## 27 Fly fishing in the Driftless Area

JIM SCHMIEDESKAMP

SPRING 2022,  
VOLUME 46, NUMBER 1

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COVER PHOTO:  
AERIAL VIEW OF MENOMONEE FALLS WILDFIRE,  
APRIL 2, 2021, BY WISCONSIN DNR/JOHN JORGENSEN



# FROM THE SECRETARY **PRESTON D. COLE**

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MIKE GORSKI

As we eagerly await spring, there's a handful of items Mother Nature must check off her to-do list to usher in a new season. From longer and warmer days to fresh blooms and animals waking up from hibernation, there's a concert of activities happening daily.

The season's changing gives all of us a front-row seat to the elements in nature, including plants and wildlife working together.

At the DNR, we are charged with protecting Wisconsin's natural resources for generations to come. It is a job that we take very seriously. And we also can't do it alone.

Partnerships with Friends Groups — whose members volunteer their time, services and support to enhance Wisconsin's state parks, forests, trails and recreation areas — and with conservation organizations that work on projects that improve and protect Wisconsin's wild places are critical to furthering the DNR's mission.

Volunteers are also an integral part of what we do across our state park system at campgrounds, nature centers and visitor centers. Whether you volunteer for a few hours or a couple of weeks, your service makes a world of difference. And now, signing up is easier than ever with our new online volunteer portal. Visit [dnr.wi.gov](http://dnr.wi.gov) to learn more.

When we think of spring in Wisconsin, it is important to remember that spring in Wisconsin is wildfire season. The Spring issue

cover story focuses on fire season and provides several tips for preparing your home for wildfires.

Unlike out West, spring is the most dangerous time for wildfires in Wisconsin. After the snow melts and before plants, trees and grass turn green, fires can spread quickly.

Now more than ever, our favorite outdoor spaces play an important role in our lives. Whether out in nature or at home in our backyards, together we can protect the lands we love by preventing wildfires and recreating responsibly.

As a forester, I know firsthand how incredible a career in forestry can be. "Trail Blazers" showcases women in forestry at the DNR and the work they are doing to protect Wisconsin's forests. Our foresters are not only on the front lines fighting fires, they are also working hard at nurseries, maintaining heavy equipment, overseeing forest health programs and more.

Spring also marks the start of the Ojibwe spring fishing harvest season. In "Tribal Harvest Traditions," readers will learn about the importance of this tradition and the protected tribal rights to hunt, fish and gather off-reservation on land within the Ceded Territory.

Getting outdoors does a body good. This issue shares a number of ideas for getting outdoors, including day trips near Milwaukee, an insider's guide to fly fishing in Wisconsin's Driftless Area and engaging field trips.

Happy reading. 📖



# NEWS YOU CAN USE



## STAMP TREATMENT FOR STATE NATURAL AREAS

New stamps planned from the U.S. Postal Service this year celebrate the Mississippi River with scenic photography highlighting each of the 10 states the waterway touches. Wisconsin is featured in the pane of 10 Mighty Mississippi Forever Stamps with a colorful fall photo of Great River Road and the Maiden Rock Bluff State Natural Area in Pepin County, taken by Jay Olson-Goude.

The Mississippi River stamps are expected to be available in late spring.

## IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE IN WISCONSIN

The Wisconsin Initiative on Climate Change Impacts, a nationally recognized collaborative network for linking science with action, recently released its 2021 report — "Wisconsin's Changing Climate: Impacts and Solutions for a Warmer Climate" — the most comprehensive assessment to date on the impact of climate

change in Wisconsin. The WICCI report is the product of 14 working groups of over 200 scientists and practitioners representing more than 50 national, state and local agencies, organizations and universities and was reviewed by WICCI's 24-member Science Advisory Board.

Using the latest data, the report identifies that since 1950, statewide temperatures have warmed by

3 degrees Fahrenheit and precipitation has increased 17%. The latest two decades have been the warmest on record, and the past decade the wettest.

The WICCI report stresses the need for large and rapid reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and identifies steps Wisconsin can take to store carbon, reduce emissions and adapt to a wetter and warmer future. To learn more, go to [wicci.wisc.edu](http://wicci.wisc.edu).



Planting a tree for Arbor Day.

## FOR THE EARTH AND THE TREES

April brings opportunities to do good in the outdoors. Look for events near you to celebrate Earth Day on April 22, including at state properties as part of annual Work\*Play\*Earth Day activities. And don't forget Arbor Day on April 29. Check [dnr.wi.gov/education/arborday](http://dnr.wi.gov/education/arborday) for fun activities to do at home, in the classroom or at home-school and to plan your own tree planting project.



RECREATIONAL BOATING & FISHING FOUNDATION

## CASTING CALL

Mark the calendar for May 7, the start of the 2022 general inland fishing season. The opener always falls on the first Saturday in May. Check [dnr.wi.gov/topic/fishing](http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/fishing) for regulations and details for a successful season.



TRAVEL WISCONSIN

## FIND FREE FUN, FIRST WEEKEND IN JUNE

June 4-5 is Free Fun Weekend in Wisconsin. With state park admission and trail fees waived statewide, it's the perfect time to explore the 49 state parks, 15 state forests and 44 state trails where adventure awaits. To find state parks to enjoy during Free Fun Weekend or anytime, check [dnr.wi.gov/topic/parks](http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/parks).

There's also free fishing all weekend with no license required to cast on the state's 15,000 lakes and 84,000 miles of rivers and streams. Visit [dnr.wi.gov/adventure/freefun](http://dnr.wi.gov/adventure/freefun) for Free Fun Weekend details.



# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



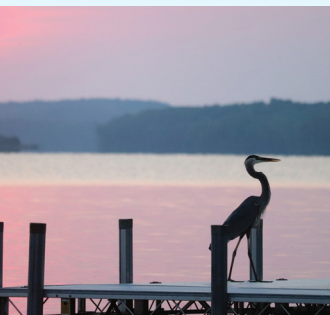
## CHICK WEATHERS THE STORM

Your insert with information on cerulean warblers ("NHC Field Notes," Winter 2021) jogged a memory of last summer. This cerulean warbler chick was found by my grandchildren after a high wind thunderstorm in the town of Wagner, in Marinette County.

We watched it for several days, as the adult birds kept feeding it after it had hopped to shelter in our woodpile. It survived and fledged within a week.

Bruce Solberg  
Green Bay

*Thanks for the email, Bruce. It's a great reminder of how important it is to resist the urge to "help" when you see a seemingly abandoned young animal. For more on how to "Keep Wildlife Wild," see the story on Page 8.*



## HERON IN THE MORNING

I was going through my photos from a trip last July to Lac Vieux Desert near Phelps and found one of

a great blue heron I took during the early morning hours. I thought you might be interested in seeing it.

Dane Thompson  
Marshfield

Write in by sending letters to [DNRmagazine@wisconsin.gov](mailto:DNRmagazine@wisconsin.gov) or WNR magazine, P.O. Box 7921, Madison, WI 53707.



## WRENS READY FOR THE WORLD

My wife, Jill, has had very good luck attracting and fledging wrens in her unique wren house. Over the years, we have watched numerous fledglings take their first flight. It is not unusual to see three, four or even five little heads poking out to see who will be the first brave one to take off. Within hours of this photo, they were all out in their new world.

Jeff Baker  
North Prairie

## FISHER HISTORY

I'm a long-term, avid reader of *Wisconsin Natural Resources* magazine. During the fall of 2020, I was able to obtain the attached photo of a mature fisher on my trail cam in Langlade County. The history of the fisher in Wisconsin is a worthy story.

Kim Debenack  
Appleton

*Thanks for sharing, Kim; we confirmed the ID and fisher details with wildlife biologist Shawn Rossler, the DNR's furbearer ecology expert. The fisher (Pekania pennanti) is a member of the mustelid family (also known as the weasel family) that historically ranged throughout Wisconsin. It*

*disappeared from the state by the 1930s, extirpated by logging, forest fires and unregulated trapping.*

*In the 1950s and '60s, the DNR and U.S. Forest Service reintroduced the fisher in the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest region and established fisher*

*management areas. By the 1980s, the state's fisher population had rebounded enough to allow a limited harvest, with a special permit required, and the fisher is now a regular sight in forested areas of Wisconsin.*

*Scan the QR code to learn more about fisher harvest permits.*







## FISH (EGGS) OUT OF WATER

Here is a photo from a small tributary near the Kinnickinnic River in northwestern Wisconsin. The photo was taken on Nov. 7. These bright orange fish eggs were sitting on a log suspended above the water. Fish in a tree? How can that be?

Ben Toppel  
River Falls

*There are possible explanations for this, said Kasey Yallaly, a DNR fisheries biologist serving Dunn, Pierce and St. Croix counties in northwest Wisconsin.*

*"Very cool photo!" she replied. "We had a few high-water events after most of the trout had spawned this past fall, and I'm guessing that is what led to these trout eggs being stranded above the water level. When trout spawn, they lay their eggs within gravel areas in the stream, and the flooding may have displaced the eggs onto this log."*

*Because the eggs were found in early November when trout still might have been spawning, another possibility is that a predator pulled a trout from the water near the log, with the fish releasing eggs in the struggle. "It would be pretty crazy if that happened," Yallaly said. "But we will never know for sure!"*

## EDITOR'S NOTES

The Winter issue article on "How to Build a Bat House" featured incorrect supply dimensions. The correct supply dimensions for the wood materials are as follows:

- 1 piece 26"x24"x 0.5" plywood
- 1 piece 32"x24"x 0.5" plywood
- 1 piece 24"x4"x 0.5" plywood
- 2 pieces 26"x1.5"x 0.75" common wood/pine
- 1 piece 20"x1.5"x 0.75" common wood/pine



You asked, our DNR experts answered. Here is a quick round-up of interesting questions sent to us on Facebook.



**Q: I found a dead vole in my basement window well. Will they attempt to get in my house like mice?**

A: Voles do not scavenge food scraps or live in dwellings like house mice or white-footed mice. They are pretty content in their underground burrows and tunnels, eating seeds, roots and tubers, either tucked away or available year-round. The one in your window well most likely fell in there accidentally and couldn't get out. We see this with salamanders as well.

Voles are beneficial to our ecosystems. They are important prey animals for numerous hawks, owls and larger mammals. They also play an important ecological role in moving native seeds around, and some help keep insect populations in check.

**Q: When are safety yellow and safety green going to be added to the list of acceptable hunting gear colors? If those colors are visibly bright enough to be working on the side of the highway in the dark, they should be good enough for hunting in the woods.**

A: For about 35 years, blaze orange was the standard color to help easily spot a person deer hunting around you. In 2016, the Legislature added blaze pink as an alternative option. The DNR does not plan on pursuing more color options at this time.

**Q: Are cougars coming to Wisconsin from the Dakotas? I live on the western edge of Wisconsin and it's 275 miles to the far eastern edge of the Dakotas. That seems like a long way to roam.**

A: That is a long way to roam! Cougars have repeatedly proven their strong tendency to disperse and capacity to roam hundreds of miles as they search out new territory and a mate. In 2021, the department documented cougar scat in Wisconsin, and genetic analysis indicated the cougar originated from the Black Hills of South Dakota. The longest cougar dispersal on record originated in South Dakota and traveled through Wisconsin before ultimately being killed by a car in Connecticut. That is a straight-line distance of over 1,500 miles!

Scan the QR code to learn more about cougars in Wisconsin including sightings.



**Q: Why do I need a hunting license to hunt on my private property?**

A: Although individuals can privately own land, state and federal governments manage wildlife populations in North America in the public trust. As a public resource, everybody owns wildlife in North America. Individuals cannot own wildlife.

*We value your continued support and welcome comments or feedback at [dnrmagazine@wisconsin.gov](mailto:dnrmagazine@wisconsin.gov).*



Newborn fawns rely on their spot camouflage to stay safe, often while their mother forages nearby.



ISTOCK/4100PS

# MAKE THE PLEDGE TO KEEP WILDLIFE WILD

**MOLLY MEISTER**

*It's a beautiful spring day, and while outdoors, you stumble across a baby animal. Perhaps it's a robin fledgling hopping along the ground near its nest or a fawn lying quietly in the grass of your backyard.*

Worry may set in and you wonder if you should help. In each of these examples, it's best to leave the animal where you found it.

Young wild animals possess amazing abilities to survive on their own. Just because they're small doesn't mean they're helpless.

Generally, young wild animals found without a parent are not orphans. Most of the time, a parent, usually the mother, is hiding somewhere nearby, waiting for you to leave the area to retrieve their young.

Human encounters with wildlife increase in spring — especially those involving young animals born following the thaw — as people head outside more frequently to enjoy the warming weather. While most of these encounters are harmless, there are times when well-intentioned people disrupt wildlife because they mistake a lone baby animal for an orphan.

Remember: A young wild animal's best chance for survival is with its mother.

## **WILD VS. DOMESTIC ANIMALS**

Unlike domestic animals, which have been selectively bred over generations to depend on people, wild animals roam freely and find all the food, water and shelter they need to survive.



## FIVE REASONS TO KEEP WILDLIFE WILD

While some wild animals may accept help from people (such as nesting structures and bird feeders), each native Wisconsin wildlife species is built to thrive outside, even when they're young. What may seem like a welcoming, warm garage or cozy home under the staircase is an unfamiliar world for a captive wild animal.

Never attempt to rehabilitate young or injured wildlife on your own. Taking possession of a wild animal, even when you have its best interests at heart, puts the animal's health and survival at risk.

"Meeting the behavioral, social, nutritional and psychological needs of wildlife requires trained wildlife rehabilitation professionals," explained Amanda Kamps, DNR wildlife health conservation specialist. "This is especially true for young animals, who need care that mimics what their mother would provide in nature."

### HOW TO HELP

So, what can you do? First, consult the resources available on the DNR website to help determine if a wild animal needs your help.

"Contact a licensed wildlife rehabilitator immediately if you determine a wild animal is sick, injured, truly orphaned or if you're unsure," Kamps said. "They understand the unique, complex set of needs of wildlife and how best to raise wild orphans to an

■ **Stress:** Wild animals become highly stressed when near humans or domestic animals because they view both as predators. Such stress can cause health problems and even death.

■ **Diet:** When in captivity, a wild animal's dietary needs are not easily met, putting them at high risk of serious nutritional deficiencies.

■ **Disease:** Parasites and diseases carried by wild animals may be transmissible to domestic animals and humans.

■ **Behavior development:** Wild animals rely on their own species to learn normal social behaviors and survival skills. Without such habituation, animals are unlikely to survive in the wild.

■ **It's illegal:** State and federal laws protect most wild animals, which cannot be possessed without authorization. In Wisconsin, captive wildlife regulations allow a wild animal to be possessed up to 24 hours for transfer to a licensed individual such as a wildlife rehabilitator or veterinarian.

age where the animal can survive on their own after release."

Never take a wild animal out of its environment except when directed by a licensed wildlife rehabilitator.

If an orphaned animal is determined non-releasable because it cannot thrive in the wild, the rehabilitator will determine the next best option. Sometimes, wild animals can adjust well to captivity, becoming educational ambassadors for their species. Animals held for such purposes receive the specialized care they need as captive wildlife.

### KEEP WILDLIFE WILD

When encountering a young wild animal, do not touch, chase, capture or take it home as a pet.

"No matter how cute a young wild animal may appear, it is still wild, with sometimes defensive and dangerous natural instincts to help it survive," Kamps said.

But don't be afraid of wildlife, she added.

"We encourage you and your family to get outdoors and watch wildlife from a safe and respectful distance," she said. "Using binoculars and cameras can help you get a closer look, without interfering with the animals' natural behavior." 🐦

*Molly Meister is a public information officer in the DNR's Office of Communications.*

## LEARN MORE



Scan the QR code for helpful resources on how to tell if a wild animal is truly orphaned and for information on contacting a wildlife rehabilitator.



*They might seem vulnerable, but fledgling robins and other young wildlife possess remarkable abilities to survive on their own.*



SPRING  
BRINGS  
OJIBWE  
FISHING  
SEASON

# TRIBAL HARVEST TRADITIONS

SARAH HOYE

Jason Bisonette has been spearfishing during the Ojibwe spring fish harvest since he was a teenager. It's a tradition he now shares with his three sons.

"I spear fish because I am Ojibwe," he said. "That's who we are. That's what we do."

Before heading out on the water, the 49-year-old Marine Corps veteran sprinkles loose tobacco into the water as an offering to the water spirits and asks for safety.

"The act of taking something like a fish means I can be a contributing member of the community. We always try to give as much as we can away," he said. "There's a lot of honor in that."

Bisonette, Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Lake Superior Ojibwe tribal member and dean of students at LCO Ojibwe School, first started spearfishing with his brothers in the 1980s.

Around that time, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit ruled — in what is commonly known as the Voigt Decision — that Ojibwe tribes had retained off-reservation (Ceded Territory) hunting, fishing and gathering rights in 19th-century treaties with the United States. The decision includes the right to catch fish by spearing and netting.

Shortly after the decision, mobs of white residents packed boat landings

across the Northwoods in violent protest, throwing rocks, hurling racial slurs, ramming boats and even shooting guns.

"There were certain lakes my brothers wouldn't take me on. Lakes that they knew there was going to be trouble," Bisonette said. "A lot of it is just based on ignorance."

Although the protests began to go away in the 1990s, some incidents still occur. The Department of Natural Resources reminds Wisconsinites and visitors of the protected tribal right to fish in certain Wisconsin waterways. There are legal consequences one could face if found interfering with that right.

"We fully support Ojibwe sovereignty and treaty rights," said DNR Secretary Preston D. Cole. "The department has zero tolerance for harassment of tribal members who are exercising their treaty rights."

## READY FOR THE SPRING SEASON

The spring tribal fish harvest usually begins in mid- to late-April and runs through May, or shortly after the ice melts. The season typically starts in the southern portion of the Ceded Territory and moves north as the season progresses. The tribal harvest is not a date-regulated activity, and as a result, there is neither an open nor closed season.

There are 2,300 lakes larger than 25 acres in the Ceded Territory, including 919 walleye lakes and 623 musky lakes. Each year, the Ojibwe tribal members fish a portion of these lakes outside of reservation boundaries during their spring harvest season.

Tribal members rely on these lakes to preserve their cultural heritage and also act as a vital food source for their communities.

Tribal spearfishing happens at night in very shallow water. When the lake reaches a certain temperature, fish will begin to spawn. Bisonette and his fishing party wear headlamps to catch the reflection of a walleye's eye.

"(Fishing) is just such an engrained part of who we are," Bisonette said. "Being able to teach the next generation about why we fish and what we do with it is part of our DNA. There's an excitement that comes with that."

Each tribal fishing season, tribal members harvest using various high-efficiency methods, including spearing and netting. The DNR collaborates with the Ojibwe tribes to uphold these tribal rights.

Part of that collaboration is working together to set a safe harvest limit for every walleye and musky lake in the Ceded Territory. These safe harvest limits ensure that the walleye and musky harvests do not adversely affect each lake's fishery.



By March 15 of every year, based on the safe harvest limits, each tribe declares how many walleyes and muskellunge it intends to harvest from each lake. Harvest begins shortly after the ice melts, with nightly fishing permits issued by the tribes to their members to harvest a specific number of fish, including one walleye between 20 and 24 inches and one additional walleye of any size.

All fish that are taken are documented each night by a tribal creel clerk or warden present at boat landings. Once the declared harvest is reached in a given lake, no additional permits are issued for that lake, and the harvest ends. The Great Lakes Indian Fish & Wildlife Commission provides daily reports to the DNR for all fish harvested off-reservation by spearing or netting in the Ceded Territory.

## TRIBAL RIGHTS

In the mid-1800s, the Lake Superior Ojibwe Tribes ceded more than 22,000 square miles of tribal territory across northern Wisconsin, including all or parts of 30 counties, through a series of treaties with the United States federal government.

When the Ojibwe ceded lands to

the federal government, they maintained their rights to hunt, fish and gather off-reservation on land within the Ceded Territory.

After Wisconsin became a state, however, state and local officials frequently assumed statehood superseded Ojibwe treaty rights and regulated or prohibited off-reservation hunting, fishing and gathering by tribal members.

In 1983, the Voigt Decision in federal court reaffirmed the Ojibwe had the right to hunt, fish and gather off-reservation in the Ceded Territory, including the right to catch fish by spearing and netting.

## INTERFERING WITH TRIBAL RIGHTS

It is illegal to interfere or attempt to interfere with tribal members who are exercising treaty rights, including the spring harvest of walleye. Prohibited conduct against any tribal member includes, but is not limited to, stalking, obstructing access to lakes, recklessly operating watercraft, creating hazardous wakes, threatening violence and committing acts of violence.

"The DNR is committed to making sure all tribal spring harvest seasons are safe and enjoyable," Cole said. "The Ojibwe spring harvest, which includes spearfishing, is an integral and respected part of Wisconsin's history. The DNR is actively engaged with tribal law enforcement officers to protect tribal rights, not only for the upcoming season but for generations to come."

These treaties and court decisions remain in place today, ensuring the Ojibwe can continue to exercise their right to hunt, fish and gather off-reservation in the Ceded Territory.

To assist in regulating those activities, 11 Ojibwe bands formed the Great Lakes Indian Fish & Wildlife Commission, which provides fully trained wardens to patrol the Ceded Territory and ensure tribal members are following applicable tribal conservation laws. Violations are cited in tribal courts for prosecution. Ojibwe spearing and netting are carefully monitored and regulated by staff from both GLIFWC and the DNR.

"Tribal members have the right to hunt, fish and gather in the Ceded Territories," said Wisconsin Attorney General Josh Kaul. "Any attempt to interfere with those rights is illegal and should be reported to local law enforcement and the Great Lakes Indian Fish & Wildlife Commission."

Anyone violating tribal rights could be charged under several Wisconsin laws, fined up to \$10,000 and sentenced up to nine months in prison. Additionally, any tribal member whose rights are violated may bring civil action for damages and seek a restraining order.


Wisconsin law also includes hate crime penalty enhancements for many crimes if they are committed, at least in part, based on a "belief or perception regarding the race, religion, color, disability, sexual orientation, national origin or ancestry of" the victim.

For example, when a hate crime penalty enhancement applies to a felony, the maximum fine can be increased up to an additional \$5,000, and the maximum prison term can be increased up to an additional five years.

## REPORTING RIGHTS INFRINGEMENT

If you have witnessed or been subject to infringement of tribal rights to hunt, fish and gather that is active and involves physical harassment or a verbal threat of physical harm, report that to local law enforcement immediately by calling 911.

If the threat has passed, please contact local law enforcement at the non-emergency number. Call or text the confidential DNR Tip Hotline at 1-800-TIP-WDNR, as soon as possible to make a report of the event.

The Great Lakes Indian Fish & Wildlife Commission also recommends reporting any instances of infringement to maintain a record and provide appropriate follow up. Call GLIFWC Enforcement at 715-685-2113 to document an incident. 

*Sarah Hoyer is the DNR communications director and editor-in-chief of Wisconsin Natural Resources magazine.*





*Firefighters from the DNR and other units responded to a Menomonee Falls wildfire last April, one of over 1,000 state wildfires in 2021.*

# W K O N S

UP IN

**SPRING MEANS  
PEAK TIME FOR  
WILDFIRES IN  
WISCONSIN**



Known as the Marcy Road Fire, a blaze on April 2, 2021, in Menomonee Falls created smoke that was visible throughout the Milwaukee metro area.



MARC SASS



MARC SASS

## JOSHUA MORRIS

*Last April, Marc Sass was behind the wheel of a fire engine, rushing toward a fast-moving wildland fire in Menomonee Falls. While on his way to the scene, he called for ground and aerial support.*

*Sass is a DNR cooperative area specialist who assists with wildfires in southeastern Wisconsin. Having worked fires for nine years, he knows brush fires like these can burn up to 1,500 degrees and travel as swift as the wind, which means his team must be quicker.*

As the fire raged on, thick black smoke could be seen from across the Milwaukee metro area. A spark from a train on a nearby railroad track started the fire that would burn nearly 230 acres.

Hours later, as the sun was setting and smoke continued to rise, the fire and its imminent danger were at the very least contained. It would be monitored for several days until completely put out.

While the Menomonee Falls fire was the largest of the season, it was just one of the 1,086 wildfires that burned 2,582 acres in 2021.



MARC SASS

*The DNR maintains a full suite of fire suppression vehicles, equipment and tools, centrally located to improve response times to the department's fire protection areas.*





*Dry and windy conditions make spring a prime time for wildfires in Wisconsin, and the DNR joins other first responders in providing firefighting aid.*

### FIRE DANGER HIGH

From warming homes to cooking food, fire can be a helpful tool. Fire also can be destructive.

Unlike out West, spring is the most dangerous time for wildfires in Wisconsin. After the snow melts and before plants, trees and grass turn green, fires can spread quickly.

While spring is always much welcomed after Wisconsin's long winters, the season's warm, dry and windy conditions create the perfect recipe for wildfires.

Although wildfires can happen just about any time of the year, historically 60% of all annual wildfires in

Wisconsin occur in March, April and May. In the state's southern tier, fire danger could begin as early as mid-to late-February and eventually progresses northward through the state.

With debris burning the leading cause of Wisconsin's wildfires, weather is the single most crucial factor influencing how fires start and spread. Temperature, wind, humidity and precipitation are the key weather components that determine the daily fire danger.

While spring is Wisconsin's most critical fire season, wildfires can still happen in summer. Despite the elevated humidity and vegetation turn-

ing green, there is increased activity that may spark fires, such as equipment use, fireworks and camping.

Fall has a shorter peak for fire danger but can still produce a dangerous environment for fires as the leaves fall, covering the ground with dry, dead and loose material. Leaf burning and using fire pits to keep warm are also common in fall.

Although winter is the least dangerous time, some fires can burn for weeks, which can be a problem if spring begins to approach.

### HOW DO FIRES HAPPEN?

Wildfires can start anywhere, especially where people live. People start 98% of wildland fires, most often by burning debris in the spring when vegetation is still dead and dry. Fires also have been started by heavy equipment and vehicles, while lightning strikes have sparked a small percentage.

Generally speaking, wildfires of greater intensity tend to occur in areas of the state with sandy soils and pine country, though more populous areas may see a higher number of smaller fires. The average size of wildfires handled by the DNR is under 1 acre.

"A wildland fire fuel can be anything from long prairie grass, pine needles or leaves, to dead trees that are tipped over," Sass said.

Because fuels can be found in rural and urban areas, the DNR sets burning restrictions in certain parts of the state and requires burning permits, which help lower the number of wildfires. Burning permits are free and easy to obtain and protect lives, property and natural resources from the damages of wildfires. Go to [dnr.wi.gov/burnpermits](http://dnr.wi.gov/burnpermits).

### ON THE GROUND

Burning permits help prevent wildland fires, but what happens when a fire ignites? The DNR has a full suite of fire suppression equipment, vehicles and tools to ensure fires don't get out of hand.

DNR forestry technicians like Alex Grubbs, based out of Trout Lake, work tirelessly to ensure the equipment is properly maintained before, during and after a fire occurs.

"I've always been interested in being a first responder," Grubbs said. "I like



The DNR often conducts controlled burns to achieve a variety of property management goals, with more than 35,000 acres burned in 280 prescribed fires last year.



this job because it brings multiple jurisdictions and communities together. At the same time, you're hopefully saving houses, lives and keeping people safe."

Grubbs and other technicians throughout the state make sure vehicles with water tanks are full and equipment is functioning correctly during fire calls. The DNR's firefighting equipment is located centrally in areas staff are protecting to improve response times, which average under 10 minutes.

In the spring, fire officials remain on high alert until most vegetation has greened up. The DNR does not oversee wildland fire suppression in all areas across Wisconsin, and volunteer fire departments are a crucial partner in fire suppression efforts.

If a fire is burning in a cooperative protection area, which means it is outside the DNR protection area, local fire departments take the lead on responding to fires and can request the DNR's help if needed.

The department regulates DNR protection areas and requires a burning permit during certain times of the year. The DNR is primarily responsible for responding to fires large and small in these areas.

## GOOD FIRE

Not every DNR fire situation is reactive. And the conditions that can produce wildfires are similar to those the department needs to conduct prescribed burns.

Prescribed fire, also known as controlled burning, is an essential tool for restoring animal habitat, controlling growth of invasive plants and promoting native species and oak and pine regeneration. In 2021, the DNR performed 280 prescribed burns, burning 35,916 acres around the state.

In addition to habitat management, controlled burns can help reduce fuels to mitigate more dangerous wildfires.

"One of the benefits of prescribed fire is the removal of excess dead fuels that can build up over time," said Michele Witecha, a prescribed fire specialist for the DNR. "This is great for the natural community, but in a few places, it also plays an important role in reducing the possibility of a wildfire. Without dead and dry fuels, an ember has less chance of igniting a fire."

Witecha's role is to establish guidelines for planning, implementing and

evaluating prescribed burns throughout the state. Such burns are carefully orchestrated to achieve desired goals.

When surface debris is removed, it provides an opportunity for native grass and wildflower species to compete and propagate once more. The decrease in both brush and surface debris also allows for better foraging.

"I have been lucky enough on several occasions to see deer and turkey choosing to forage in the evening at a still-smoking burn unit," Witecha said. "Good fire allows the forest to continue to provide benefits to wildlife, even right after its occurrence." 🦋

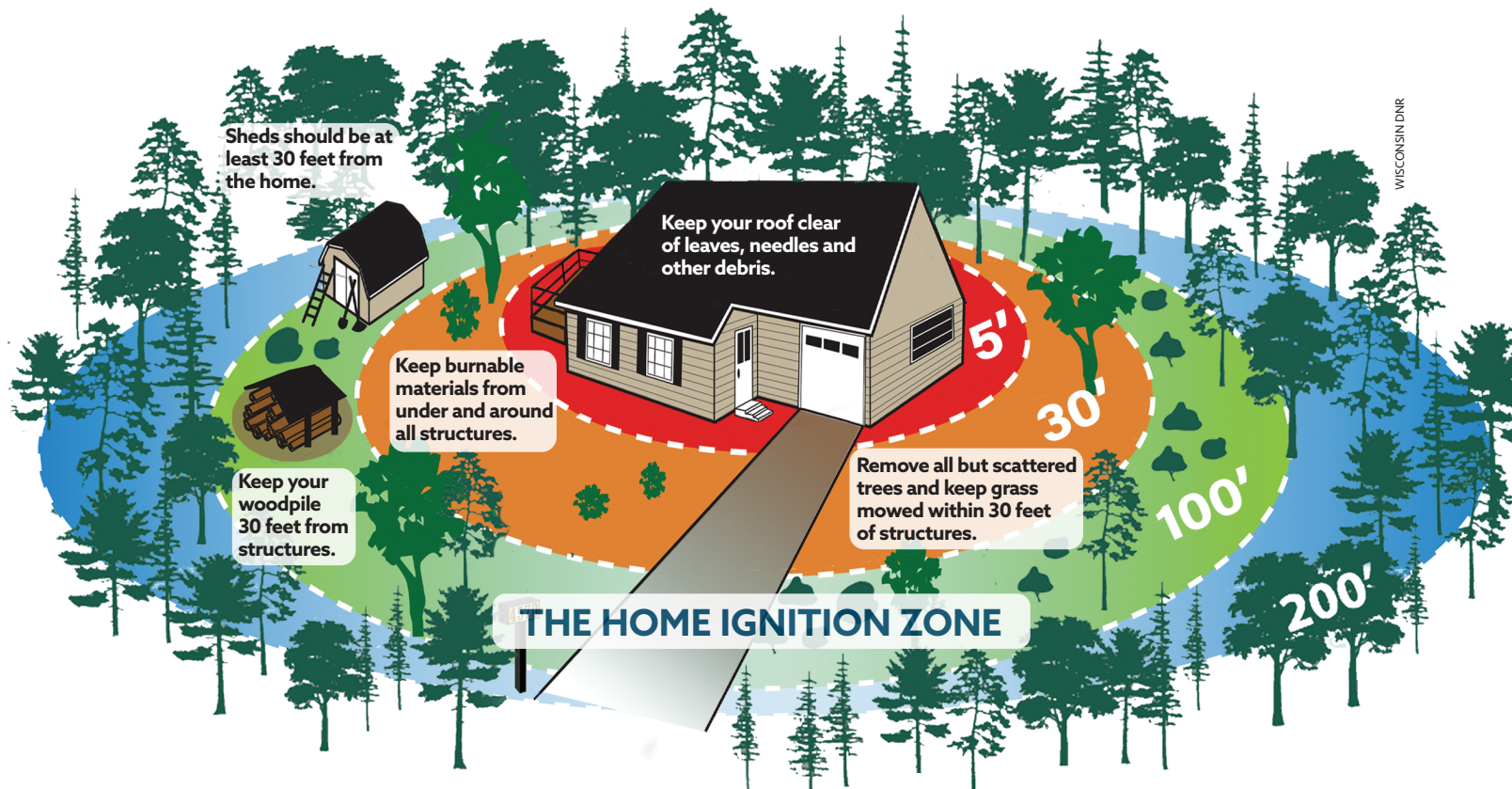
*Joshua Morris is a public information officer in the DNR's Office of Communications.*

## LEARN MORE



Scan the QR code to learn more about fire management in Wisconsin.





# BE FIREWISE

## HOW TO PREPARE YOUR HOME FOR WILDFIRES

### KATHRYN A. KAHLER

Wisconsin has a long history of dangerous wildfires that can burn homes and other structures in forested areas and elsewhere, and spring is the most prolific time for wildfires in the state. The DNR estimates that 80% of all buildings destroyed by wildfire in Wisconsin are lost between March and June.

Three factors that affect wildfire are weather, topography and fuel — naturally occurring flammable material. While the first two are beyond your control, you can assess your risk, manage available fuel and take steps to prepare your home for wildfires.

To assess your property for risk, first be aware of the grades of fuel and how they are ignited:

- Fine fuels such as grasses, leaves and pine needles ignite easily and burn quickly.



- Ladder fuels including shrubs and small trees carry fire to treetops.

- Heavy fuels like trees, large limbs, downed logs and outbuildings burn longer and produce more heat.

Finally, think about ignition. Most homes near forestland destroyed by wildfire are ignited by small surface flames or flying embers that land on roofs, porches or other flammable surfaces. Most buildings are burned by fires that started on the same property or at a neighbor's.

With a little effort, you can improve your home's chance of surviving a wildfire. A home that is Firewise can survive a wildfire even without help from firefighters.

Picture your home in the center of a 100 to 200-foot circle, called the home ignition zone. In a well-managed zone, fuel sources are reduced so an approaching fire is starved of the fuels it needs to burn.



Follow these Firewise tips to minimize wildfire risk within your home ignition zone.

### WITHIN 5 FEET

- When planning new construction or upgrades, use fire resistant roofing and siding, cover vents with wire screen, box-in eaves and use fire resistant or noncombustible materials for decks or porches.
- Keep plants to a minimum near your home, using low-growing deciduous species rather than more flammable evergreens.
- Don't use wood mulch and instead opt for bare dirt, mowed grass or decorative stone.
- Keep roofs, gutters and decks free from leaves and pine needles.

### 5 TO 30 FEET

- Don't plant highly flammable evergreens.
- Trim tree limbs at least 10 feet from roof.
- Keep your lawn mowed, watered and free of dead vegetation, leaves and pine needles, especially during spring fire season.
- Rake debris from around buildings and wood fences.
- Prune dead branches off trees and shrubs.

### 30 TO 100 FEET

- Manage vegetation by creating space between evergreens and maintaining a mix of evergreens, deciduous trees and shrubs, mowed grass and garden islands.
- Trim lower branches of evergreens 6 to 10 feet up from the ground.
- Keep firewood stacks, sheds and stored vehicles at least 30 feet from your home.
- Around propane tanks, maintain a 10-foot area that is free of any combustible material.

### 100 TO 200 FEET

- Thin trees, leaving space between canopies.
- If your home is on a hill or surrounded by mostly pines, extend the home ignition zone to 200 feet and remove woody debris build-up on the forest floor. Fire burning uphill heats and dries the fuel in its path, causing the fire to burn faster and with more intensity.

### EMERGENCY ACCESS

- For emergency vehicle access in case of a fire, make sure your address

**Minimize fuel sources for potential wildfires by keeping your lawn mowed and watered and raking away dry leaves and pine needles.**



or fire number sign is visible from both directions of travel.

- Driveways should be at least 12 feet wide, with 13 feet of overhead clearance for fire department access.
- If possible, create a space at the end of your driveway with adequate room for an emergency vehicle to turn around once it reaches your home. 🚒

*Kathryn A. Kahler is associate editor of Wisconsin Natural Resources magazine.*

### LEARN MORE



Scan the QR code for more on protecting your property from wildfire.

## IS YOUR HOME AT RISK?

Use this checklist to help assess your home's wildfire risk. The more times you check YES, the higher the risk. Now is the best time to act.



Having a Smokey Bear fire danger sign in your community means your home may be more at risk for wildfires.



## WILDFIRE RISK INDICATOR

	YES	NO
I own a home in a rural area.		
My home is in a wooded area.		
I see tall grass, oaks or pine trees outside.		
I see more pine needles and leaves than lawn.		
The soil around my property is sandy.		
Burning takes place on my or my neighbor's property (campfires, leaf or brush burning, burn barrel use).		
I, or my neighbor, dump wood ash outdoors.		
I have heard about past wildfires in the area.		
There is a Smokey Bear fire danger sign in my community.		



**'IT WAS AN OPPORTUNITY  
TO BE DIFFERENT, TO PROVE  
THAT I COULD DO IT.'**

REBECCA VASQUEZ,  
DNR FORESTER



# TRAIL BLAZERS

## WOMEN IN FORESTRY CAREERS CUT A PATH FOR DIVERSITY

### HOWARD HARDEE

Rebecca Vasquez's young career as a forester with the DNR's Division of Forestry has been intense.

At the start of her career after receiving her degree in forest management from UW-Stevens Point in 2016, her duties involved conducting prescribed burns on bluffs overlooking the Upper Mississippi River and operating heavy machinery in difficult terrain.

"You get some awesome views, and it gets pretty dangerous," she said, reflecting on her literal trial by fire.

It's dynamic, ever-changing work. Foresters must know the many species of trees and their role in ecosystems across Wisconsin and stay ahead of emerging diseases and pests — not to mention working with

an array of public and private land managers. But Vasquez was never intimidated by the challenge of breaking into a male-dominated field.

"That didn't discourage me at all from going into forestry," she said. "It was an opportunity to be different, to prove that I could do it."

Vasquez recently became an incident commander based in Richland Center, responding to wildfires, floods, windstorms, tornadoes and other emergencies in her Type 6 Engine.

The lights and pumps of the bright yellow truck awe schoolchildren when she's leading educational programs about forest management and fire safety in the community. Those same features were once overwhelming for her; she had never driven such a large vehicle before launching her career in natural resources.

"At first, it's a bit intimidating, learn-

ing how all the pumps work and how to fix your own equipment — which is part of the job, knowing how to keep your emergency equipment running at all times of the year," she said.

It's important to turn that sense of intimidation into opportunity. And after spending a few years in the field, Vasquez's advice for women is "to go for it. We're more capable than we know."

### LEADING THE WAY

Having cut out a place for herself in the forestry profession, Vasquez is following a trail blazed by several remarkable women. That includes Eloise Gerry, a research scientist who in 1910 became the first woman appointed to the Forest Products Laboratory in Madison, and Mary Connor, a Wisconsin native and forest industry pioneer who championed the wise use of renewable forest resources.



Today, women in various roles enhance the workforce in the DNR's Forestry Division, helping to sustainably manage the state's 17 million acres of forestland. But there's still work to do in creating a more inclusive forestry industry.

As of June 2020, less than 20% of the DNR's forestry staffers were women and less than 3% were non-white minorities. Nationwide, fewer than 3% of the country's foresters and conservation scientists are Black, and only 19% are women, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

The DNR is focused on advancing diversity across its workforce and programs to better meet the needs of the environment and the people it serves.

"We're trying to look at how, as an agency, we can reach out and get people interested in forestry, even down to the high school level," explained Colleen Matula, a forest ecologist and silviculturist based in Ashland who has been with the DNR for more than 20 years. "We have a

forestry class almost every year, and we might have only one or two women in the class."

Matula believes recruiting more female foresters would "foster a diversity of ideas" when solving problems and "cultivate a stronger organization."

### ROOTED IN PEOPLE SKILLS

Matula's passion for the outdoors developed during her childhood spent amid the forested landscape of Michigan's Upper Peninsula. Seeking a career in natural resources, she sampled a variety of environmental disciplines at Northland College in Ashland. She worked as a seasonal timber marker for the U.S. Forest Service before taking a permanent forestry position in Michigan's Ottawa National Forest.

Later, she recalls being heavily outnumbered by men in her graduate school classes at UW-Eau Claire in the late 1980s. She overcame shyness by writing letters to professors and getting her name out there for project-based positions, leading

to her master's degree and a decades-long career with the DNR.

Her experience is part of why she believes young people interested in forestry should take classes in communications and sociology along with studying natural resources.

"I think understanding people is very important to our work," she said. "We might be able to understand how a tree grows and how to manage that species of trees, but most of the time we're working with people as well."

### PUSHING PAST BOUNDARIES

As a former forest hydrologist, Carmen Hardin remembers finding great satisfaction in working with landowners and helping them manage their timber harvests. Now, as director of the DNR's Applied Forestry Bureau, she is highly rewarded by overseeing large-scale programs relating to forest health, urban forestry, forest products, silviculture, forest research, forest hydrology and reforestation that have a broad impact on forestry in her state.



**'(I'M MOTIVATED) TO BE A ROLE MODEL AND A POSITIVE INFLUENCE FOR OTHER WOMEN IN THE FIELD.'**

ANGELA ROGERS,  
DNR FORESTER



# WHAT IT'S LIKE FOR WOMEN IN FORESTRY

*Women work in various roles to ensure forests continue supporting wildlife, water quality, timber harvests, human health and recreational opportunities in perpetuity throughout Wisconsin.*



## ADENA RISSMAN

With more than 20 years in the field of forestry, Adena Rissman, a professor with UW-Madison's Department of Forest and Wildlife Ecology, has observed dramatic but uneven changes in women's participation.

"There are more women leading forestry agencies, out in the field, doing forest research," she said. "But there are still many places with few women and where women question if they belong."



## REBEKAH LUEDTKE

Rebekah Luedtke is a woman in a leadership position. She serves as executive director of the Wisconsin County Forests Association, a non-profit organization that champions the 30 Wisconsin counties with forestlands.

As a former field forester and fire dispatch coordinator in Minnesota, she has always noticed that men outnumber women in forestry, but she doesn't let the disparity deter her from advocating on behalf of county forestlands.

"I'm the kind of person who can go toe-to-toe with anybody, so it doesn't discourage me in the least," Luedtke said.



## GINA KEGLEY

Gina Kegley, a subcontractor who operates a logging forwarder machine in Wisconsin's Northwoods, has always felt like she's in her element working alone in the woods, or sometimes in

groups where she's usually the only woman. Her father ran a sawmill when she was a child, so she formed an early appreciation for the logging trucks and other heavy machines involved in timber harvest.

"The nicest thing is that you can come out here and do your own thing," she said. "I love the machines. When I started, I didn't know anything about sorting lumber or different species of wood, didn't know how to fix anything. I still learn something new just about every day."



## KIM DESTREE

"Careers in forestry should be hugely appealing to young women who love nature and aren't drawn to office work," said Kim Destree, forester and owner of Quast Forestry Consulting based in Rosendale.

She works primarily with private forestland owners, overseeing timber sales and writing plans under Wisconsin's Managed Forest Law, a program that incentivizes sustainable forestry practices on private lands.

"Being able to work outdoors every day is such a gift," she said. "This is such a fun job and it's so rewarding."

"If you've got to take a couple years to get some experience under your belt — maybe going to different parts of the country or working for different entities with the ultimate goal of getting into forestry consulting — absolutely do it."

— HOWARD HARDEE

"I can work on projects that have influence throughout Wisconsin and the Great Lakes region," Hardin said. "I enjoy the people and programs I work with."

In the early days of her career, it wasn't uncommon for Hardin to be the only woman among a group of loggers, foresters or woodland landowners. But she had female

role models working in natural resources who helped her feel comfortable and created a sense of belonging.

Hardin hopes that she, in turn, has been able to serve as an inspiration for younger women — such as her niece, who is majoring in forestry as a freshman at UW-Stevens Point.





MAGGIE AUGUSTA

**'WE'RE TRYING TO LOOK AT HOW, AS AN AGENCY, WE CAN REACH OUT AND GET PEOPLE INTERESTED IN FORESTRY.'**

COLLEEN MATULA, DNR FOREST ECOLOGIST AND SILVICULTURIST

"It's really exciting for me to see my niece pursuing forestry and the natural resources fields as a career," Hardin said. "I hope I have been able to show her that there really aren't any boundaries on what you can do in your life."

#### **SKEPTICS FUEL MOTIVATION**

Angela Rogers, a DNR forester based in Keshena, serves as a resource for private landowners who need guidance in managing property, whether for protecting wildlife habitat, preserving beauty or providing monetary value. Leading educational walkthroughs with landowners is the part of her job she most enjoys.

"Being able to walk around with landowners and help them identify different trees and plant species, educate them on insects and diseases they might have to worry about, and seeing how happy they are to learn something about their land and being able to sustain it into the future, that's probably the most rewarding for me," she said.

She also takes pride in having picked up Geographic Information System mapping, mostly by learning on the job. Most recently, she used her GIS skills to map the wildfire that burned through Superior National Forest last August, providing critical updates for the public and wildland firefighters on the ground.

Earlier in her career, Rogers became determined to show that women have diverse roles to play in managing Wisconsin's forests — and she did so while skillfully yielding a chainsaw and maneuvering bulldozers.

"It motivated me to be a role model and a positive influence for other women in the field," she said. "Nobody's going to tell you, you can't do it." 🍷

*Freelance writer Howard Hardee has worked as an investigative journalist, government reporter and environmental reporter covering natural disasters and forest health.*



MAGGIE AUGUSTA

**'I HOPE I HAVE BEEN ABLE TO SHOW THAT THERE REALLY AREN'T ANY BOUNDARIES ON WHAT YOU CAN DO IN YOUR LIFE.'**

CARMEN HARDIN, DIRECTOR OF DNR'S APPLIED FORESTRY BUREAU



# Accessibility

## at Wisconsin State Park System Properties



### Campsites (E means electric site)

- 1 Amnicon Falls State Park - Campsite 35
- 2 Big Bay State Park - Campsite 29E
- 3 Big Foot Beach State Park - Campsites 79E, 81E, 94E
- 4 Black River State Forest - Campsites 21E, 221
- 5 Blue Mound State Park Campsites 28, 32
- 6 Brule River State Forest - Campsites 4, 39
- 7 Brunet Island State Park - Campsite 16E
- 8 Buckhorn State Park - Campsites 8, 61E, 62E, 63E
- 9 Chippewa Flowage - Cedar Tops West Campsite
- 10 Copper Falls State Park - Campsite 7
- 11 Council Grounds - Campsite 46E
- 12 Devil's Lake State Park - Campsites A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, A6
- 13 Flambeau River State Forest - Connors Lake Campground
- 14 Governor Earl Peshtigo River State Forest - Campsite 14
- 15 Governor Dodge State Park - Campsites 16E, 55E, 241E, 355E
- 16 Governor Knowles State Forest - Campsites 5, 130
- 18 Governor Thompson State Park - Campsites 29E, 30E
- 19 Harrington Beach State Park - Campsite 131E
- 20 Hartman Creek State Park - Campsite 47E
- 21 High Cliff State Park - Campsites 26, 86E
- 23 Interstate State Park - Campsite 32E
- 25 Northern Unit - KMSF - 420E, 421E, 304E, 305E, 927, 622E, 624E
- 26 Pike Lake - KMSF - Campsite 21E
- 27 Southern Unit - KMSF - 342E, 340E, 290E, 177E, 1E (no pets), 768E
- 28 Kohler-Andrae State Park - Campsites 14E, 60E
- 29 Lake Kegonsa State Park - Campsite 56E
- 30 Lake Wissota State Park - Campsite 14E, 91
- 32 Merrick State Park - Campsite 6E
- 33 Mill Bluff State Park - Campsite 18
- 34 Mirror Lake State Park - Campsites 63, 132
- 35 New Glarus Woods State Park - Campsites 52 & 53
- 37 NHAL - Campsites 463, 438, 271, 222, 318, 800
- 38 Pattison State Park - Campsites 15, 36E
- 39 Peninsula State Park - Campsites 776E, 779E, 322E, 324E
- 40 Perrot State Park - Campsite 4E
- 41 Point Beach State Forest - Campsite 31
- 42 Potawatomi State Park - Campsites 1E & 4E
- 44 Richard Bong State Rec Area - Campsite 6E, 214E, 106E, 331E, 401E
- 45 Roche-A-Cri State Park - Campsite 8E
- 46 Rocky Arbor State Park - Campsites 34E, 35E
- 47 Straight Lake State Park - Campsite 4
- 48 Turtle-Flambeau Scenic Waters Area - Campsite A1
- 50 Wildcat Mountain State Park - Campsite 30E
- 51 Willow River State Park - Campsites 120E, 325E
- 52 Wyalusing State Park - Campsite 214E
- 53 Yellowstone Lake State Park - Campsites 42, 49

### Adaptive Equipment

- 2 Beach Wheelchair
- 8 Cross-Country Sit Skis, Adaptive Kayak & Beach Wheelchair
- 11 Adaptive Kayak
- 12 Adaptive Kayak
- 17 Cross-Country Sit Skis
- 19 Beach Wheelchair
- 24 Cross-Country Sit Skis
- 25 Cross-Country Sit Skis
- 28 Beach Wheelchair
- 34 Cross-Country Sit Skis
- 40 Adaptive Kayak
- 42 Adaptive Kayak
- 44 Mobi Beach Mat
- 49 Beach Wheelchair

### Cabins

- 5 Blue Mound State Park
- 8 Buckhorn State Park
- 10 Copper Falls State Park
- 13 Flambeau River State Forest - Elk Ridge Yurt
- 19 Harrington Beach State Park
- 21 High Cliff State Park
- 28 Kohler-Andrae State Park
- 34 Mirror Lake State Park
- 42 Potawatomi State Park
- 44 Richard Bong State Rec Area

### Fishing Piers

- 3 Big Foot Beach State Park
- 4 Black River State Forest
- 7 Brunet Island State Park
- 8 Buckhorn State Park
- 11 Council Grounds State Park
- 14 Governor Earl Peshtigo River State Forest
- 17 Governor Nelson State Park
- 18 Governor Thompson State Park
- 19 Harrington Beach State Park
- 20 Hartman Creek State Park
- 21 High Cliff State Park
- 23 Interstate State Park
- 25 Northern Unit - KMSF
- 26 Pike Lake - KMSF
- 27 Southern Unit - KMSF
- 28 Kohler-Andrae State Park
- 29 Lake Kegonsa State Park
- 30 Lake Wissota State Park
- 31 Lakeshore State Park
- 34 Mirror Lake State Park
- 37 NHAL State Forest
- 42 Potawatomi State Park
- 44 Richard Bong State Rec Area
- 47 Straight Lake State Park
- 51 Willow River State Park
- 52 Wyalusing State Park
- 53 Yellowstone Lake State Park

- 53 Properties with accessible amenities  
does not include state trails
- 97 Accessible campsites
- 10 Accessible cabins
- 27 Accessible fishing piers
- 31 Accessible trails
- 16 Adaptive equipment pieces

### Hunting Blinds

- 8 Buckhorn State Park
- 44 Richard Bong State Rec Area

### Trails

- 2 Boardwalk Trail
- 8 Oak Barrens and Campground Trails
- 10 Doughboys Nature Trail
- 12 Tumbled Rocks Trail and Grottoes Trail
- 15 Stephen's Falls Trail
- 19 Quarry Lake Trail
- 21 Butterfly Pond and Indian Mounds Trails
- 22 Memorial Wetland Trail
- 23 Silverbrook Trail and Skyline Nature Trail
- 24 Plantation Path Trail
- 26 Boardwalk Trail
- 27 Paradise Springs Nature Trail
- 28 Black River Marsh Boardwalk and Friends Fishing Pond
- 29 Prairie Trail
- 31 All Trails
- 33 Nature Trail
- 34 Echo Rock and Lakeview Trails
- 36 Fern Trail
- 37 Tom Roberts Nature Trail
- 39 Portion of Sentinel Trail
- 40 Nature Center Prairie Trail
- 44 Nature Explore Classroom
- 45 Chickadee Rock Trail
- 46 Pine Valley Trail
- 49 Brachiopod Trail
- 51 Hidden Ponds Nature Trail

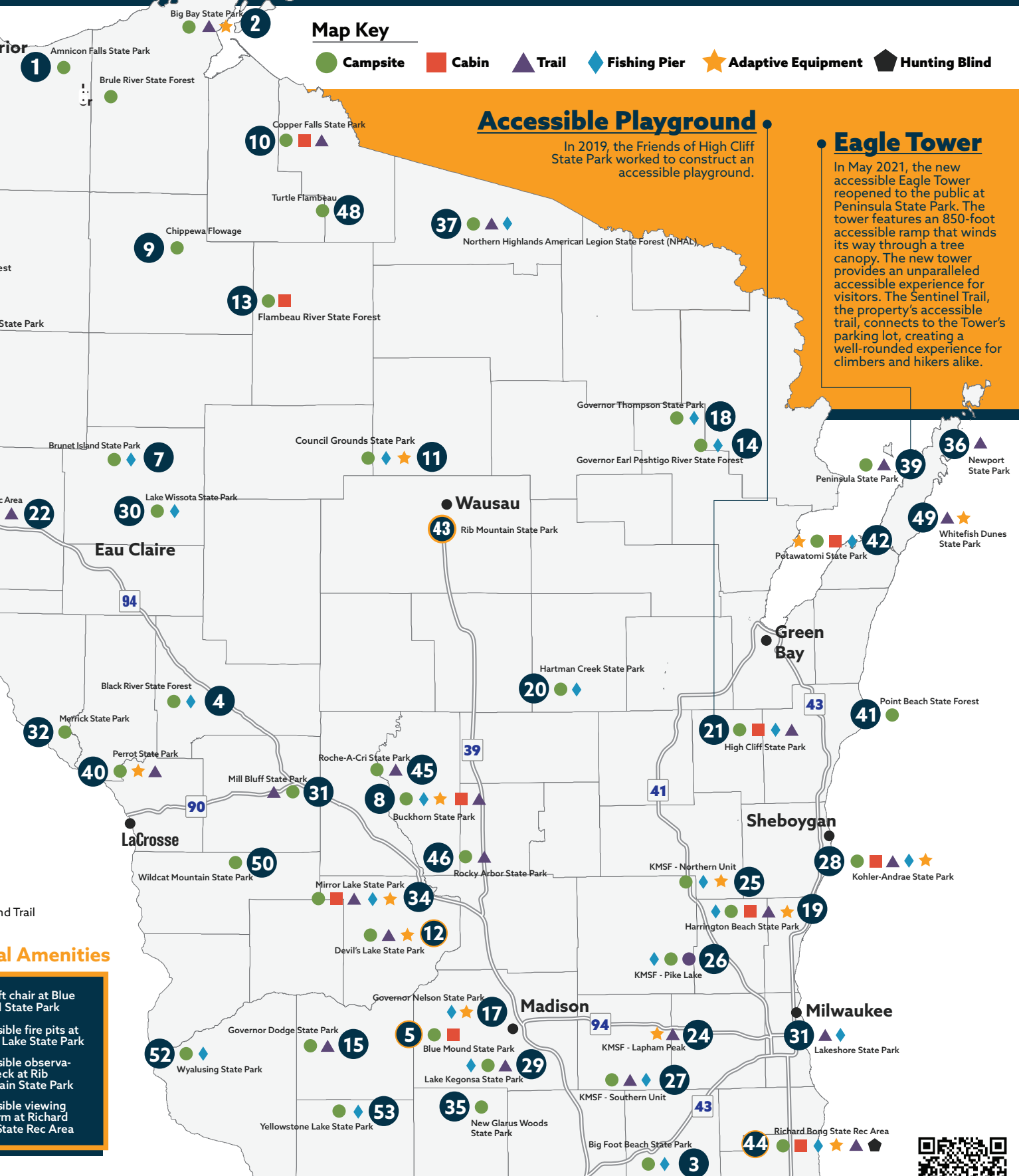
### Additional

- 5 Pool lift at Mound
- 12 Accessible Devil's
- 43 Accessible tion de Mount
- 44 Accessible platform at Bong S





Wisconsin's outdoors are for everyone. From adaptive equipment to accessible fishing piers, hiking trails and campsites, the DNR opens the outdoors to people of all abilities to make memories, learn new skills and enjoy the benefits of nature. Use this map to discover accessible features in parks and plan your visit.



## Map Amenities

Accessible chair at Blue Lake State Park  
Accessible fire pits at Blue Lake State Park  
Accessible observation deck at Rib Mountain State Park  
Accessible viewing platform at Richard Bong State Rec Area

For more information about accessibility at Wisconsin State Park System properties, scan the QR code or visit [dnr.wi.gov/tiny/776](https://dnr.wi.gov/tiny/776)





# Daytrippin' **IN** MILWAUKEE

**KATIE GRANT**

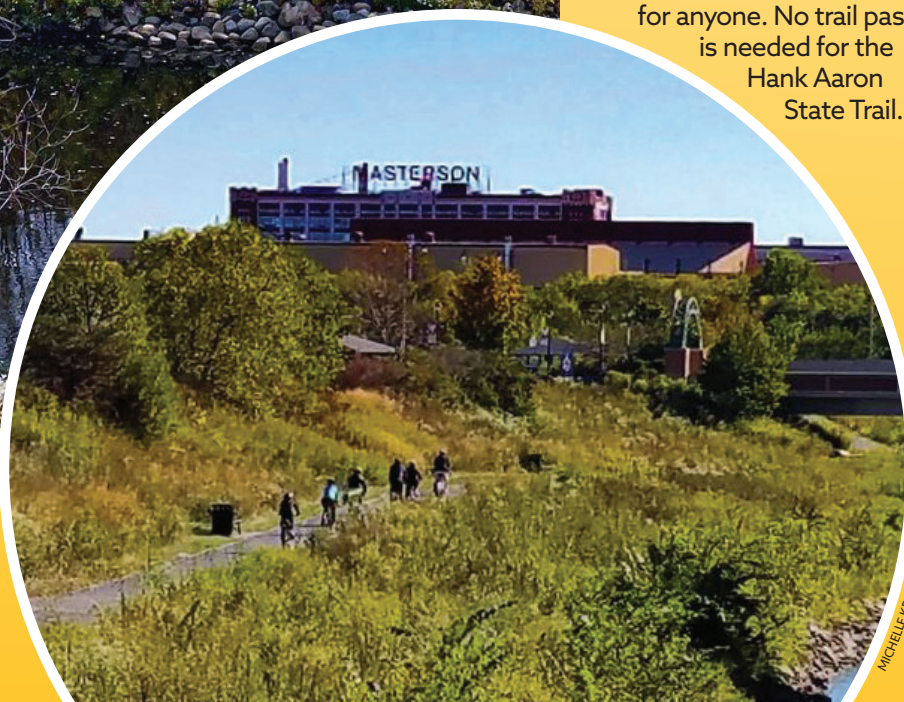


KIMBERLY ANN CUNNINGHAM

## **RIDE THE HANK AARON STATE TRAIL TO A BREWERS GAME.**

There's no better way to celebrate the start of another Brewers season than by exploring the trail named in honor of baseball legend Hank Aaron. Take in the city's views along this 12-mile trail connecting the Lake Michigan lakefront to American Family Field and beyond to about 123rd Street and Bluemound Road in Brookfield.

Part of the trail west of the ballpark is along a former rail corridor, and approximately 10 miles are paved asphalt, making it a relatively flat ride great for anyone. No trail pass is needed for the Hank Aaron State Trail.



MICHELE KRAMER



Every spring, Wisconsinites eagerly await the warmer temps and getting back outdoors to take in all the fresh air they can get.

The southeastern corner of Wisconsin may seem an unlikely place for outdoor adventure. A hidden oasis for outdoors lovers, Milwaukee

and its surrounding suburbs are bursting with opportunities to explore the great outdoors.

Find your adventure this spring in and around Milwaukee. Show us how you're exploring the area on social media using #OutWiGo.



WISCONSIN DNR

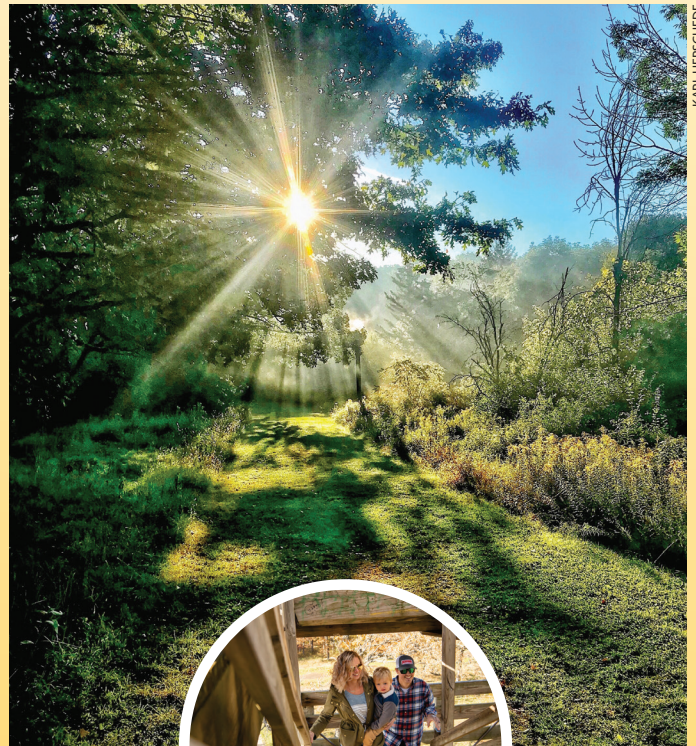
WISCONSIN DNR

### STOP AND SMELL THE FLOWERS AT HAVENWOODS STATE FOREST.

Wisconsin's only urban state forest features 237 acres of grasslands, woods and wetlands in the city. Nestled on Milwaukee's north side, this triangle of land has had an interesting history — serving as farmland, the Milwaukee County House of Correction, an Army Disciplinary Barracks

and training facility, a landfill and more over the years.

Take a hike on the property's 6 miles of trails, visit the butterfly garden, rain gardens and urban arboretum to enjoy native wildflowers and trees, or sit back and watch the wildlife that make this area their home.



KARL HEISCHDE

TRAVEL WISCONSIN

### CLIMB TO THE HIGHEST POINT IN WAUKESHA COUNTY AT LAPHAM PEAK.

Just 25 miles west of Milwaukee, the Lapham Peak Unit of the Kettle Moraine State Forest was formed 10,000 years ago when a glacier covered much of Wisconsin. The forest's 45-foot observation tower sits atop the highest point in Wauke-

sha County at 1,233 feet above sea level.

There are more than 17 miles of loop hiking trails to discover with varying difficulty, prairie restoration sites to take in and additional trails for those riding horseback or mountain bikes to enjoy.





JASON HAAS

## EXPLORE ALL THE AREA HAS TO OFFER ON MILWAUKEE COUNTY'S OAK LEAF TRAIL.

Criss-crossing over 135 miles throughout Milwaukee County, this multi-use trail will take you just about anywhere in the Milwaukee metro area.

The system features seven main branches, two scenic loops

and two east-west connectors.

Trails are mostly smooth asphalt, and nearly a quarter of the route hugs the shores of Lake Michigan. Along the way, you'll discover plenty of parks, beer gardens, farmers' markets, beaches and more.



ANNIE OWENS



EDDIE DANIEL/AWEALTHOFNATURE.ORG



WENDY PIERCE

## TAKE IN THE HISTORY OF MILWAUKEE'S BREWERIES WITH A STROLL ALONG THE BEERLINE TRAIL.

The Beerline Trail runs along a former freight train corridor used to transport ingredients to some of Milwaukee's most historically famous breweries. Spotted with public art pieces created by community members, this urban trail serves as a gathering space for the

surrounding neighborhoods.

You may even come across a community concert, cleanup day or run/walk. The Beerline Trail is split into two segments and funded in part by the National Park Service and Wisconsin DNR stewardship grants.



ERIN CAFFEY



ERIN CAFFEY

## LEARN ABOUT WISCONSIN'S NATURAL RESOURCES WITH THE URBAN ECOLOGY CENTER.

With three locations in Milwaukee, the Urban Ecology Center connects people in cities to nature and each other. Volunteer to help with a community science

project, rent a space in their community garden, attend a nature-based event or simply visit and enjoy their beautiful stretches of urban green space. 🌿

*Katie Grant is a publications supervisor in the DNR's Office of Communications.*





DENNIS FRANK

*Wild brown trout are among the sought-after species in Wisconsin's Driftless Area.*

# WHERE LIFE IS BUT A **TROUT STREAM**

## FLY FISHING WISCONSIN'S DRIFTLESS AREA

**JIM SCHMIEDESKAMP**

If you enjoy fly fishing for trout, Wisconsin's Driftless Area offers some of the highest concentrations of trout waters in the Midwest.

The Driftless Area is a region encompassing parts of Minnesota, Illinois, Iowa and western Wisconsin, including as far south as the Illinois border and expanding up to St. Croix County and reaching to the state's western border, the Mississippi River.

Not having been impacted by glacial drift during the last ice age, the Driftless Area contains beautifully sculpted topography such as forested hillsides that reach



**Fly fishing in Richland County, part of the Driftless Area that features hundreds of miles of public access streams.**



LEN HARRIS

**A resting mayfly, one of the main insects of the Driftless Area along with the caddisfly and stonefly.**



LOU PERLAKY

down to valleys cut into limestone bedrock and populated by over 600 spring-fed coldwater trout streams.

Forests, prairie remnants, wetlands and grasslands provide habitat for flowers and wildlife. Land is farmed by the

descendants of those who first settled here, by the Amish who adopted the area and a new breed of organic farmers.

Woven throughout the Driftless Area are thousands of miles of Class I, II and III trout streams that are home to native brook and wild brown trout.

Besides a pair of waders and a 4-weight or 5-weight fly rod and reel outfit, an angler needs the right mix of flies resembling the aquatic insects, land-dwelling insects (ants, beetles and hoppers) and baitfish that inhabit the area's small rivers, streams and creeks. ♻️

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*Retired corporate marketing executive Jim Schmiedeskamp is a member of Chicago's Oak Brook Trout Unlimited Chapter, where he was the communications and publicity chair from 2014-2020. He writes about Midwest conservation initiatives and fly-fishing adventures.*



# ASSEMBLING THE IDEAL DRIFTLESS AREA FLY BOX

Mat Wagner, owner of the Driftless Angler, a fly shop and guide service based in Viroqua, provides his fly box must-haves with size and color recommendations for a successful time on the water.

Wagner founded his business in the heart of the Wisconsin Driftless Area in 2006 and has been fishing the region for 16 years. His ideal fly box is stocked with flies that mimic area food sources most sought by the region's trout. His favorites include:



## **Hale Bopp leech:**

A grouping of feather-like material that imitates a swimming leech by moving like ribbon in the water or slow in currents. Opt for a size 10 with a brass bead head in natural, gray or black.



## **Black foam beetle:**

A black foam body, moose hair legs and a dash of orange foam give this fly all the trout food appeal. Select a size 16 hook.



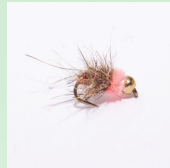
## **Sculpzilla:**

Resembles a small sculpin fish and features a cross-eyed cone and red eyes for the head. Choose a size 8 hook in olive.



## **Hippie stomper:**

Takes the form of terrestrial insects such as a beetle or hopper in grassy banks. This is a foam body top-water "attractor" fly that also can work as the top fly with a nymph in a two-fly rig. Features materials such as clipped and spun deer hair that give the appearance of centipede legs and white wings. Select a size 12 hook.



## **Pink squirrel:**

Acts as a nymph (underwater immature stage of a mayfly or stonefly) and features a body with a mix of brown fur, light reflective and natural or synthetic material with a tungsten bead. Select a size 16 jig hook.



## **San Juan worm:**

Red chenille fastened to a hook to dance in the water like a worm. Select a size 12 hook.



## **Scud:**

Has the appearance of one of the Driftless Area trout's main food sources — small freshwater crustaceans. Select a size 14 hook in tan or gray for productive results.



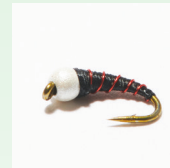
## **Klinkhammer:**

Imitates young mayflies with a body that hangs just below the water's surface. Its design features a poly wing material and light tungsten head. Select a size 16 hook.



## **Elk hair caddis:**

Imitates the caddis fly with a body made of tapered thread, fine natural dubbing and cow elk hair tied for a hackle-like effect to attract trout. Select a size 16 tan hook.



## **Ice cream cone:**

Imitates a midge (an immature underwater tiny fly) and features a threaded body with ribbing and a white bead that leads trout straight to it. Select a size 16 hook.

ALL FLY PHOTOS BY SUMMIT STUDIOS



*Anglers are allowed by Wisconsin law to fish and travel along any navigable waterway if they keep their feet wet and stay in the stream.*

## KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

Wisconsin's Driftless Area offers hundreds of miles of streams with public access to fish. These include state, county or local properties and parks and private lands that have public fishing easements and open Managed Forest Law and Forest Crop Law lands.

Wisconsin laws allow anglers to fish and travel along navigable waterways if they keep their feet wet and stay in the stream. Access from a road right of way or bridge crossing is legal, just be sure to respect private property along the stream.



Scan the QR code to access the DNR's online trout mapping tool to plan your fly-fishing trip before

heading out into Driftless Area valleys. The online tool provides access to trout stream locations, regulations, public land and DNR fishing easement information.

Or use the DNR's Public Access Lands Atlas for information on publicly accessible properties and streams by visiting [dnr.wi.gov/tiny/89](http://dnr.wi.gov/tiny/89).

— WISCONSIN DNR



## SIX 'WEEDS' THAT DO GOOD IN THE GARDEN

# LET IT GROW

KATHRYN A. KAHLER

As the spring thaw and preparations to dig into gardening season begin, DNR conservation biologist Amy Staffen has advice about what to do with a few plants that make gardeners wonder, "Did I plant that?"

These "volunteers," or what many call "weeds," make their way into gardens when seeds are brought by wind, wildlife — on their fur, hooves, paws and in their droppings — or even on footwear. The loose, bare soils of home gardens make prime spots for them to take root and grow on their own.

"Weed is a subjective term for a plant that appears in an undesirable spot," Staffen said. "Native or non-native, they are typically associated with disturbance — like flooding, soil cultivation or compaction.

"Before pulling them out," Staffen cautioned, "consider if they are volunteers that are actually desirable Wisconsin natives that may benefit wildlife such as pollinators and birds." Here are some Wisconsin native plants that do good.



Monarch on  
common milkweed

### Common milkweed —

*Asclepias syriaca* thrives in well-drained soil, spreading rapidly through its roots and growing readily from seed. In midsummer, it produces fragrant lavender to pink colored flowers that benefit many pollinators, including declining populations of monarch butterflies whose caterpillars will eat nothing but its leaves. Birds eat insects attracted to the flowers, and some, like goldfinches, use the downy part of the seeds to line their nests.

LINDA FRESHWATERS ARNDT



New England  
aster

ISTOCK/DSCHALUB-NATURE-PHOTOGRAPHY

**New England aster** — *Symphyotrichum novae-angliae* blooms in sunny locations in late summer to fall with violet flowers on stalks up to 6 feet high. Flowers are an important source of nectar for pollinators, especially monarchs as they prepare for fall migration to Mexico.

### Canada goldenrod —

*Solidago canadensis* is the most common of about 20 goldenrod species found in Wisconsin. Another species better suited to larger properties, it grows abundantly in meadows and prairies and is an important food source for native bees.



Canada  
goldenrod  
and  
red-belted  
bumblebee

JAY WATSON



**Jewelweed** — *Impatiens capensis* is a self-seeding summer annual that grows in moist, shady areas. The bright orange flowers attract butterflies, hummingbirds and bumblebees, some of which are rare or in decline. It can out-compete invasive garlic mustard and makes a good addition to shady rain gardens.

Jewelweed



CHRIS EVANS/UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS/BUGWOOD.ORG

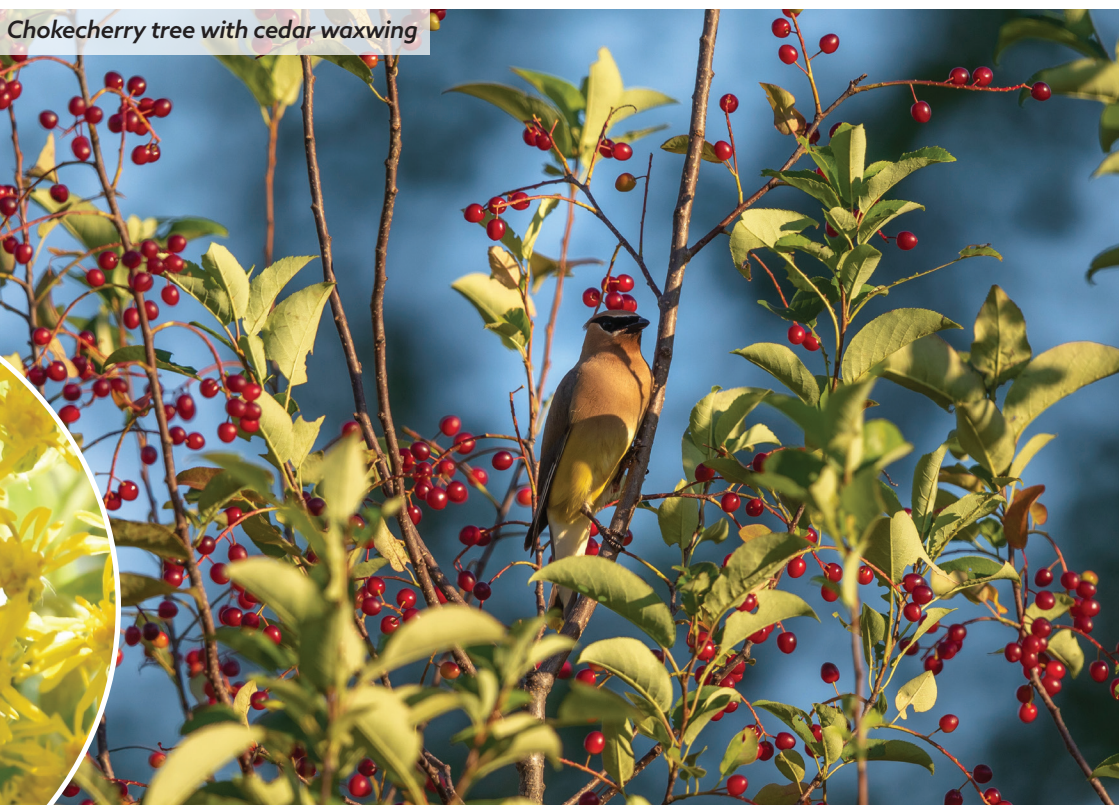


Virginia creeper

JAMES H. MILLER/USDA FOREST SERVICE/BUGWOOD.ORG

**Virginia creeper** — *Parthenocissus quinquefolia* is better suited to larger properties because of its aggressiveness. Its twining, woody vines grow up to 40 feet, covering ground, fences and walls without damage to buildings. The palmate leaves turn a vibrant red in fall, and its berries feed winter birds like chickadees, nuthatches and woodpeckers. It is a larval host for several species of sphinx moth, large hummingbird-like moths that pollinate a variety of flowers.

Chokecherry tree with cedar waxwing



LINDA FRESHWATERS ARNDT

**Cherry** — Several species of plum and cherry trees and shrubs (genus *Prunus*) can volunteer in gardens and add structural variety to home landscaping. Black, pin and chokecherries range from 10 to 80 feet in height, and their white spring flowers attract insects and hummingbirds. Their leaves and branches host caterpillars — gourmet food for birds — and provide a haven for bird nests. Fruits are eaten by many bird species throughout fall and over winter. 🐦

Kathryn A. Kahler is associate editor of Wisconsin Natural Resources magazine.



# FIELD TRIPS **FOSTER LOVE** OF OUTDOOR LEARNING

ANDREA ZANI



*Paddling field trips allow participants to explore by water at places such as Dells of the Wisconsin River State Natural Area.*

*Imagine making your way through the twilight surrounded by calls from dozens of nocturnal spring peeper frogs or breathing in the beauty of a quiet old-growth forest with soaring trees that predate you by decades.*

*The Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin offers the chance to do this and more in small group field trips led by experts in their respective fields. Hundreds of trips are planned for May through October this year, presenting opportunities to be active, explore and learn in all parts of the state.*



The field trips program started in 1993 and has ignited a true passion for the outdoors in people of all ages, including Sturgeon Moritz, 17, of Middleton.

"I'd recommend foundation field trips to anyone of any knowledge level of Wisconsin's natural wonders. If you're interested, do it," said Moritz, a high school junior who has been going on these trips since she "could first walk."

"I've loved being able to see parts of nature I can't experience in any other way," Moritz said, recalling field trips where she banded bald eagles and got up close with other wildlife. "I've seen videos of spruce grouse on YouTube, but standing 10 feet away from them? That's crazy awesome."

Her growing passion for environmental activism "definitely first began with field trips," Moritz added.

She is enrolled in a special science curriculum at school and started a social awareness club focusing on the environment. She also volunteers at a bird sanctuary and is part of the nonprofit Dane County Youth Environmental Committee, with students from 18 high schools who work on sustainability issues.

"There's no time like the present for anyone regardless of age, but especially those of us in Generation Z, to learn more about and start standing up for the environment," she said.

## INSPIRATION IN NATURE

Cathy Daus found herself drawn to the Natural Resources Foundation field trips at a different stage of life. After her husband died several years ago, she moved from La Crosse to a wooded area near Wautoma. She participated in her first field trips last summer.



Spring peeper frog

ANDREW BADJE



COURTESY OF BETH MEYERAND

*Sturgeon Moritz has attended Natural Resources Foundation field trips for several years and has become involved as a volunteer. She was a raptor handler on this 2020 outing to the Open Door Bird Sanctuary in Jacksonport, where she worked with a barred owl named Radar.*

"I went to northern Wisconsin for the geology of waterfalls," she said. "I also went on an adventure rafting tour to Baileys Harbor. I enjoyed bird banding in Waupaca and attended a few other trips as well."

Discovering nature has helped give Daus a renewed energy, she said. She tends to bird feeders and clears invasive plants on her property, among other activities.

Being outdoors has also helped Daus after losing her husband. "I just went to nature for healing," she said.

The field trips program has inspired her to embrace nature in new ways, such as foraging for dandelion leaves in spring for salads.

"I think I'm surprised, I just keep learning," said Daus, who plans to take more field trips this year. "It's really put me in touch with the greater sense of nature."

## DNR EXPERTS LEAD THE WAY

Having experts lead the Natural Resources Foundation field trips is especially beneficial for participants. Many DNR staff specializing in specific areas lead field trips for the foundation.

Conservation biologist Thomas Meyer has led trips since 1999, totaling more than 50 trips to state natural areas, "the places I've devoted my career to protecting."

"My trips are focused on Wisconsin's ecological landscapes and their native plants and animals," he said. Meyer has taken participants to view unique state properties, search for elusive orchids, marvel at carnivorous plants and explore scenic areas by kayak and even motorcycle.

"I hope to make people aware of and find an appreciation for the incredible diversity of Wisconsin's





*Hidden Brook Boardwalk at The Ridges Sanctuary offers an accessible field trips option.*



*Many field trips focus on interesting sights and sounds of the outdoors — like this moccasin flower at Spruce Lake Bog State Natural Area in Fond du Lac County.*

THOMAS MEYER

"I get an extra kick out of the young folks who crowd in close to see what's in my hand," Meyer said. "Gives me hope that a new generation of conservation biologists will be ready to take the lead when I retire."

### LEARN AND GET INVOLVED

DNR conservation biologist Andrew Badje, a trip leader since 2014, said outings are a way to teach people about the importance of citizen science efforts and how to get involved.

"My trip priorities tend to focus on our state's two DNR herptile citizen science programs, the Wisconsin Frog and Toad Survey and the Wisconsin Turtle Conservation Program," Badje said. "I also like to put attendees 'to work' on trips, casually, of course. The goal is to get them to feel like they are a biologist or naturalist for the day."

Such hands-on trips are fun for leaders and participants alike, he added.

"Some of my personal highlights are seeing the excitement of attendees while they hear Blanchard's cricket frogs for the first time, or heading down the new Ridges Sanctuary

boardwalk under twilight with spring peepers calling from every perceivable angle, or picking up a feisty male snapping turtle for trip members to get a better look," Badje said.

"Developing those personal experiences is imperative to maintaining the relationships that make citizen science projects successful."

Places like the Ridges boardwalk in Baileys Harbor are accessible to people of all abilities, he added. "It really lets everyone get involved."

### PASSION SHARED BY ALL

Many foundation field trips seek to bring outdoor opportunities to beginners or engage people who may not have felt comfortable pursuing certain activities.

Marty Moses, the Wisconsin state coordinator for Pheasants Forever, has led introductory hunting and fishing field trips. He recently partnered with John Motoviloff, hunter recruitment, retention and reactivation coordinator for the National Wild Turkey Federation, and Christopher Kilgour, founder of the diversity-focused group Color in the Outdoors, to lead beginner outings.

"We have folks travel from all corners of the state to join," Moses said. "I enjoy introducing others to the natural world. Great questions and conversation are always generated, and often the participants themselves become friends."

Motoviloff noted the desire to bring "new and diverse populations into the outdoors" and draw more people to the state's hunting and fishing traditions.

"(The outdoors) are there for everyone," he said. "And we need to keep our conservation traditions strong going forward."

### IMPORTANT MESSAGE

Another frequent trip leader, naturalist and author, John Bates, echoed the conservation focus and cited his satisfaction in sharing knowledge of the outdoors with all comers through the Natural Resources Foundation program.

"My goal is always to help people fall more deeply in love with the natural world, just that simple," said

LEXI SELBERT





*Naturalist John Bates and artist Mary Burns lead field trips on a regular basis, with a goal of helping participants “fall more deeply in love with the natural world,” Bates said.*

Bates, who leads field trips with his wife, Mary Burns, a weaver and writer. The two mainly lead educational trips to remnant old-growth forests in northern state natural areas, with occasional paddling trips.

“The highlights have nearly always been the people we’ve met who all share a deep love and passion for the natural world,” Bates said. “Their insights and questions have made us look more deeply into what we thought we understood about these sites and how we should conserve them.”

Spreading that message of conservation is important to the couple and a vital part of foundation field trips, Bates added.

“We protect what we love, and that love usually spreads in engaging other people and other places,” he said. “What’s more enjoyable than sharing your love of a place with other people who feel the same way?”

Andrea Zani is managing editor of Wisconsin Natural Resources magazine.

## JOIN A FIELD TRIP — THERE’S ‘SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE’

Since beginning in 1993, field trips from the Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin have taken more than 63,000 participants on thousands of adventures around the state, and 2022 promises even more exciting outdoor exploration.

“This year is shaping up to be our biggest season yet, with 260 field trips in the lineup,” said Christine Tanzer, program director for the Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin. “About half are repeats of popular trips, and the other half are new trips.”

As in the past, upcoming trips will highlight the wide breadth of Wisconsin’s natural resources. Tanzer noted there are outings to suit a variety of interests and age groups, plus many that accommodate those with mobility issues.

“There is really something for everyone,” she said.

After offering many virtual field trips during the pandemic last year, the Natural Resources Foundation is planning all in-person trips this season, Tanzer added, with measures in place for safety.

“There is a real thirst for knowledge of the natural world, and field trips provide an opportunity to learn from the experts,” Tanzer said. “A majority of our field trips are on state-owned properties. Many explore the ecology of rare and threatened species, so the opportunity to see them in the wild brings us closer to understanding our role as humans in the natural landscape.”

Registration for field trips will begin in early April; costs vary by trip. Participants must be members of the nonprofit Natural Resources Foundation, with membership fees starting at a \$25 tax-deductible donation.

The complete “2022 Field Trip Guidebook” is available on the foundation website, along with membership information and trip registration details.

**Go to [wisconservation.org/field-trips](https://wisconservation.org/field-trips).**

— ANDREA ZANI



*DNR conservation biologist Ryan Brady has led many bird-related field trips for the Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin. The foundation was created in 1986 and is an important partner of the DNR, focusing on fundraising and public-private endeavors to support property management, conservation and resource protection efforts statewide.*



## GET SET FOR TURKEY SEASON

Wild turkeys in Wisconsin are a prime example of a triumph for wildlife management in the state.

First successfully reintroduced in the state in 1976, wild turkey population levels have continued to increase statewide, thanks in large part to hunter and landowner support and projects that have built high-quality habitat.

The spring turkey hunting season is just around the corner, and this recipe is a great one to save for your

harvest. The 2022 season kicks off April 16-17 with the annual youth hunt. Regular season is April 20-May 31 and varies by assigned harvest authorization period.

Get ready for the season with everything you need to know at [dnr.wi.gov/topic/hunt/turkey](https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/hunt/turkey). Purchase your license online at [gowild.wi.gov](https://gowild.wi.gov). 🦃

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*Katie Grant is a publications supervisor in the DNR's Office of Communications.*





# WILD TURKEY SCHNITZEL WITH MOREL MUSHROOM-RAMP GRAVY

JOHN MOTOVILOFF

Wild turkey meat, earthy morels and pungent ramps elevate this Old World classic to a dish you could serve to anyone. Not a hunter or forager? No problem — this dish works great with domestic turkey and cultivated mushrooms and shallots.

## INGREDIENTS

- 1 boneless, skinless wild turkey breast
- Kosher salt, to taste
- Black pepper, to taste
- 2 cups panko breadcrumbs
- Green herb of choice, chopped — dried thyme, rosemary, oregano (use at least one tablespoon of herbs, in any combination)
- 2 eggs, beaten
- Peanut oil or other high heat oil like avocado oil
- ¼ cup butter
- ½ pound morel or other mushrooms, sliced lengthwise
- 1 bunch ramps, rinsed and roots trimmed off, roughly chopped (or substitute 4 shallots, peeled and chopped)
- Sifted flour, roughly two tablespoons
- 2 ounces white port wine or other white wine
- 1½ cups chicken broth
- 2 ounces heavy cream (optional)
- Lemon wedges
- Parsley for garnish

## DIRECTIONS

1. Slice turkey breast lengthwise into ½-inch-thick pieces and pound to uniform thickness.
2. Season meat on both sides with salt and pepper; allow to rest for 30 minutes.
3. Preheat the oven to 250 degrees. While the oven preheats, heat a cast iron skillet to medium-high on the stovetop.
4. Combine breadcrumbs and green herb of choice.
5. Dip turkey slices in egg, letting excess run off, then roll in breadcrumb mixture.
6. Pour oil into skillet 1/8 inch deep and heat until sizzling.
7. Add breaded turkey slices and shallow fry, being careful not to overcrowd the pan, until they are golden-brown on the outside. Do not overcook, as they will continue to cook in the oven. Place cooked turkey schnitzel on a rack on top of a cookie sheet in the oven to keep warm.
8. Wipe out the skillet, melt butter and cook mushrooms and ramps or shallots until they begin to brown. Dust with flour and allow to cook for 1-2 minutes. Deglaze with wine, scraping the bottom of the skillet to loosen any caramelized pieces.
9. Add the chicken broth and cook, whisking until smooth. If using heavy cream, remove the skillet from the heat and add the cream.
10. Garnish with a squeeze of a lemon wedge and parsley. Serve with polenta or mashed potatoes and fresh steamed asparagus.

*John Motoviloff is the Wisconsin recruitment, retention and reactivation coordinator for the National Wild Turkey Federation and the author of several outdoor-themed books, including cookbooks.*



LINDA FRESHWATERS ARNDT



ISTOCK/BHOFAK2

## WHAT'S A RAMP?

Ramps, also known as wild leeks, are an onion-y vegetable commonly foraged in the wild. Please harvest sustainably, taking only what you need, and note that state law prohibits harvesting them on state-owned lands. They also can be grown in a vegetable garden. Ramps are ephemeral, meaning they only grow for a short time in the spring, making them a perennial delicacy. Look for ramps at your local farmers market in the spring.



# CAST OFF

ARE YOU GAME FOR FISHING?

KATIE GRANT



PHOTOS BY NIKKI HANSEN

Wisconsin has more than 140 species of native fish. Our state is also home to 84,000 miles of rivers and streams and roughly 15,000 lakes. That's a lot of water for fish to live in!

The state fish of Wisconsin is the musky, or muskellunge, a ferocious member of the pike family known as the "fish of 10,000 casts." They're lean, mean fighting machines known to crack rods, bend hooks and do anything else they can to escape.

Get a head start on the unofficial start to summer by practicing your fishing skills with this magnetic fishing game. Get creative and show us the fish you create. 🐟

Katie Grant is a publications supervisor in the DNR's Office of Communications.



## MAGNETIC FISHING GAME

### → WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- String or fishing line, about the length of your arm
- Stick, twig or dowel, about 12 inches in length
- Craft magnets
- Craft glue or double-sided tape
- Paper clips
- Construction paper, cardstock or felt
- Scissors
- Glitter glue, googly eyes, markers and whatever else you'd like to use to decorate your fish

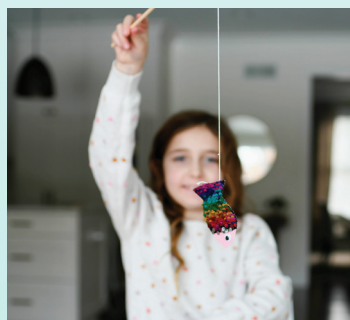
### → WHAT TO DO

#### Make your fish

1. Cut out fish shapes from your paper or felt.
2. Decorate one side however you want — get creative with googly eyes, glitter glue and more!
3. On the back, glue or tape a magnet to each of your fish.

#### Make your pole

1. Tie your string or fishing line to the end of your stick or dowel. Add a small dab of glue over the string to help keep it from sliding off.
2. Tie your paper clip "hook" on the other end of your string.



### → HOW TO PLAY

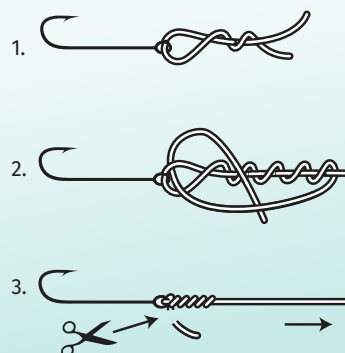
Lay out your fish on the ground, magnet side down. Cast your line and see what you catch!

**For older kids:** How many fish can you catch at once? Can you catch one faster than your friends? Can you change your fishing pole to catch more?

**For parents of younger kids:** Add numbers or letters to the fish and help them practice identifying them as they go. You also can use different colors for each fish and practice identifying colors.

### Tie a knot — it's easy!

with a clinch knot



### KNOT TYING

Tying your line to your hook is an important step to success in fishing. Practice tying yours — all you need is some string or fishing line and a paper clip. A clinch knot is one of the easiest and strongest fishing knots you can learn.



## Fishing



artist's  
brush



fishhook



wishbone



crayon



snake



needle



slipper



carrot



heart



ring



golf club



hat



nail



apple



crescent  
moon

Illustrated by R. Michael Palan



## BACK IN THE DAY

# IF IT'S FRIDAY, IT'S FISH

**KATHRYN A. KAHLER**

Friday night fish fries are a Wisconsin staple, a tradition that varies as much as the venues hosting them. There are polka and beer halls in Milwaukee and rooftop restaurants overlooking Lake Superior with scores of church basements, VFW posts and American Legion halls in between.

The type of fish and how it's cooked also differ and everybody has their favorite. Restaurant diners are most likely to find yellow perch or lake whitefish, while at-home chefs prefer walleye and bluegill.

And sides? Take your pick of fries, potato pancakes, chowder or hash browns, and the mandatory slice of rye bread, scoop of coleslaw and cup of tartar sauce.

But how did the Friday night fish fry get its start? A dive into Wisconsin

history reveals that religion and economics played a big part.

### **INFLUENCERS AND INNOVATORS**

Some of the first European immigrants to settle in Wisconsin were of German and Polish descent, and most were Roman Catholics. Back in the day, Catholic church law required members to abstain from eating meat every Friday of the year. Eventually, that rule applied only to Fridays during Lent, in the weeks leading up to Easter, but the habit was ingrained.

Fish, blessed by the church as an acceptable alternative to meat, evolved into the go-to Friday evening meal. And Wisconsin, with its 15,000 lakes — two of them Great Lakes — and 84,000 miles of rivers and streams, provided an abundance of fish to satisfy the demand.

Coupled with the church's influence, the 1920s brought more secular inspiration for the culinary tradition.

When Prohibition took the livelihood from taverns, owners had to develop other means of making money. Inexpensive fish fries were promoted to draw in customers who might also be inclined to wash the meal down with a little alcohol — on the down-low, of course.

The fish fry tradition stuck. In a 2019 survey from UW-Extension, 84% of Wisconsinites reported going out for a fish fry at least a few times a year and 14% made it a weekly habit.

### **SEEKING SUSTAINABLE SOURCES**

Early fish fries may have depended on what tavern owners could catch themselves, but these days, state law prohibits the sale of wild fish and game.

*Madison's St. Thomas  
Aquinas Catholic  
Church hosts a fish fry  
in November 1960.*

### **LEARN MORE**

For an interactive map of Wisconsin's food-fish producers, check the Wisconsin Sea Grant's Eat Wisconsin Fish webpage, [eatwisconsinfish.org/map](http://eatwisconsinfish.org/map).





## FISH FRY FLASHBACK

It's safe to say the late Jim and Shirley Widmer were experts on Friday night fish fries. Beginning in 1997, the couple from the town of Theresa in Dodge County made it their weekly retirement pastime to travel the state and sample every fish fry they could.

All told, their adventure covered 14 years, 235 miles and 450 fish fries — at supper clubs, diners, taverns, churches and Legion posts throughout the state. Jim documented every site with his Rolleiflex camera, snapping one photo of the exterior and one at the table.

The Widmers' weekly road trips are captured in a Wisconsin Historical Society essay, "Fish Fry Fridays, 1997-2010," one in a series of photo essays featuring Jim's photos of small-town Wisconsin life.

Find it at [wisconsinhistory.org/records/article/CS3968](http://wisconsinhistory.org/records/article/CS3968).

*The "Fish Fry Fridays" adventures of Jim Widmer and his wife Shirley, left, are captured in a Wisconsin Historical Society photo essay featuring Jim's photos such as this one from 1999 at the Jail House Restaurant in West Bend.*

Commercial fishing is licensed by the DNR and Wisconsin's tribal nations to ensure a sustainable harvest, prevent overharvest, safeguard non-target fish species and protect sensitive habitat.

"It is worth noting that back in the day, large commercial harvests of yellow perch from Lake Michigan were common," said Sharon Moen, the Eat Wisconsin Fish outreach specialist for Wisconsin Sea Grant.

"Today, dramatic food web changes driven by invasive mussels, human activities and climate have reduced the Lake Michigan yellow perch harvest to near zero. There is still an active yellow perch fishery in Green Bay," she said.

Modern restaurants source their fish from commercial fishers or from fish farming, also known as aquaculture.

While most of the seafood consumed in the U.S. is imported from other countries, Wisconsin's aquaculture industry is growing, and commercial fishing remains an industry with deep traditions in the state waters of the Great Lakes. In 2018, Wisconsin commercial fishing boats harvested almost 2.5 million pounds of fish valued at \$2.8 million.



Fish farming is regulated by the federal Environmental Protection Agency and local municipalities along with the DNR and the state's Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection. Depending on the size of the operation, fish farms may need permits for water diversion, high-capacity wells and discharge of waste back to state waters.

Today's fish fry harvest has come a long way from relying on a tavern owner's luck on the water that day.

### ASK FOR LOCAL

As the desire to eat locally grown food continues to increase among Wisconsinites, restaurants and their

diners alike are increasingly seeking out sources of locally harvested or farmed fish.

Wisconsin Sea Grant fisheries specialist Titus Seilheimer has simple advice: "When you order a fish fry, ask your server or chef where the fish are coming from. If you're cooking fish at home, buy directly from the commercial fisher or fish farmer."

Seilheimer said closer proximity to a fishery makes it more likely you'll find local fish, adding that the type of fish you seek matters, too.

"Think Bayfield or Door County for commercial fishers," he said. "Rainbow trout is the most-produced farmed fish, along with Atlantic salmon, perch and tilapia. Ask for those."

Consuming locally produced fish has many benefits, Moen noted.

"Eating food produced close to home is such a boost for the state's economy and food security," she said. "You know the water, can trust the quality of the fish and can feel good about keeping money in the community." 🌿

*Kathryn A. Kahler is associate editor of Wisconsin Natural Resources magazine.*



**EVERY TRIP, EVERY TIME.**

- UTV operators must be at least age 16.**



## NEW YORK TIMES SUNDAY CROSSWORD

The “\*” squares, from top to bottom: HIT/MISS, DO/DIE, MORE/LESS, IN/OUT, WIN/LOSE

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# NEW YORK TIMES SUNDAY CROSSWORD

Sci-Fi Showdown, by Stephen McCarthy;  
edited by Will Shortz.

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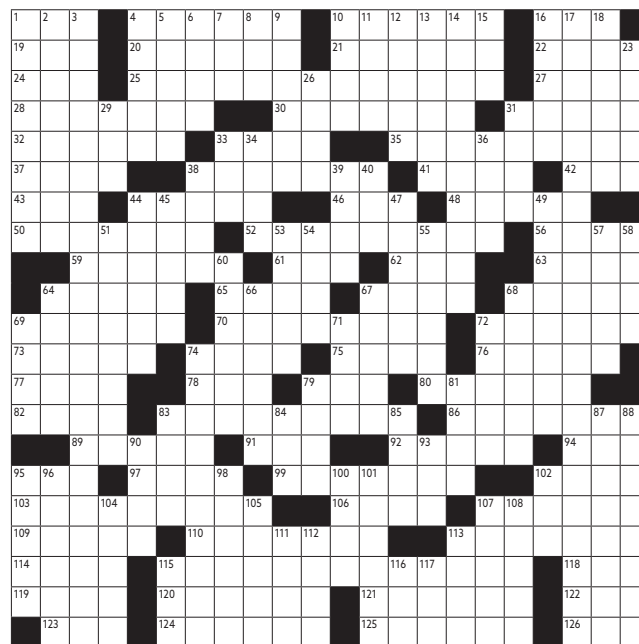
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- 1 Goal for many a T.A.
- 4 There's a Winter one in St. Petersburg and a Summer one in Beijing
- 10 Confront
- 16 QVC alternative
- 19 Grande preceder
- 20 Many a video-game player has one
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- 43 Big stretch
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- 48 Time might be shown on the side of one
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- 59 Capital-B Belief
- 61 Family name on TV's "Succession"
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- 64 Outback offering
- 65 Locale of the 2002 and 2022 World Cups
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- 69 The volcano Emi Koussi is its highest point
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- 74 "But \_\_\_ counting?"
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- 8 Diet Coke doesn't have a single one: Abbr.
- 9 Wipes out
- 10 "The Clan of the Cave Bear" heroine
- 11 What's raised in a ruckus
- 12 Waste of an election?
- 13 Confesses



- 14 Bad thing to be stuck in
- 15 On-line connection?
- 16 Arrive at, as a solution
- 17 Memorable quote from 70-Across
- 18 "Take your time"
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- 44 Slanders
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- 66 Leaves in a huff, with "off"
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- 69 One of the Prairie provinces: Abbr.
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- 84 Kind of card
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- 101 Rank
- 102 Common waiting-room viewing
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- 105 Shock treatment, for short
- 107 Slobber
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- 111 "Girls" creator Dunham
- 112 Carded, informally
- 113 Tabbouleh go-with
- 115 "Enough already!"
- 116 Suffix in organic chemistry
- 117 Quirk



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