

Fish like a
GIRL

'Tis the season



By Beckie Gaskill
 OF THE LAKELAND TIMES

It is true that fall is the season for a great many things I enjoy. In fact, fall is my favorite time of the year. The cool, crisp mornings, a slight fog hanging on the water as I ease the boat off the trailer. It is quiet and there is little other boat traffic. A hot cup of coffee in hand, I idle off in search of my version of "football season," also known as big smallmouth that are feeding up for the winter.

I love fall fishing. I really enjoy being out in the woods in the fall, too, whether I am hunting or just enjoying the fall colors. The lure of venison jerky (and venison chili and a number of other venison treats) is something that will always bring me back to the woods every fall.

But one "season" that comes along with fall that I have been enjoying for over ten years now is a writing season, or a month, really, that is known as National Novel Writing Month. Those of us involved call it NaNoWriMo. Those of us who take part, then, are Wrimos.

The month of November is National Novel Writing Month, and thousands of people from across the world get involved, pledging to write a 50,000-word novel in the month of November. It sounds ludicrous, and, of course, it is. It is also some of the most fun writing I have ever done in the way of fiction.

NaNoWriMo started in Berkley, Calif., which I suppose is no surprise. Several friends, I think there were 11 of them at the start, all wanted to write a novel, but none of them seemed to ever get anywhere. They challenged each other to write a novel in a month. A first draft only, of course. These first drafts, at least in my experience, can be rougher than anything I would ever think to show anyone else, but the point is, it gets a person writing.

If you want to be a writer, you have to write. That should sound obvious, but for those of us who have sat at a computer staring at a blank screen, being mocked by nothing but a blinking cursor — the struggle is real, as they say. Even the best of ideas in our heads can pale as we put them to pen and

See **Gaskill**. . . page 30



DEAN HALL/LAKELAND TIMES

BIRCH 'BINO

A white deer blends in with a stand of birch trees on Sunday, Sept. 18 in Boulder Junction.

2022-23 Northwoods Youth Deer Hunt Challenge is underway

By Beckie Gaskill
 OF THE LAKELAND TIMES

The Northwoods Youth Deer Hunt Challenge (NYDHC) for 2022-23 is now underway. The NYDHC is open to any youth, aged 10-17 who is a permanent resident of Iron, Oneida or Vilas counties. Hunters ages 10-12, who have not completed a hunter education course in Wisconsin, are eligible to compete in the Mentored Hunt category. All other youth hunters must have a Hunter Education Certificate that allows the purchase of a hunting license in the state of Wisconsin. Each hunter must also have a Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) issued license for the category in which they wish to enter their harvested deer. No group hunting is allowed in order to be considered for this contest.

The categories, besides mentored



hunters, include archery, which combines both early and late, and gun season, which combines early, regular and late seasons.

Deer must be harvested from Forest, Iron, Lincoln, Oneida, Price or Vilas Counties in order to be considered. Harvesting a deer, however, is not required to attend the NYDHC banquet at the end of the season, or to receive door prizes at that event.

Any antlered deer a youth hunter wishes to have considered for the Challenge Awards must be brought in to one of the official scoring loca-

tions within 10 days (240 hours) or being registered with the state. The following are official scoring locations: North Country Taxidermy of Hazelhurst, The Lakeland Times of Minocqua and Kurt's Island Sport Shop of Minocqua.

Banquet

All youth hunters who register for the NYDHC will be invited to the 2022-23 banquet, which will be held in January of 2023. Youth need

See **NYDHC**. . . page 27

HOW TO JUMP START YOUR BUCKS



Dale Streubel

SPECIAL TO THE LAKELAND TIMES

It never seems to be satisfying enough to simply enjoy observing deer in the wild or even to those people watching them in their backyard. Instead, we have now progressed to the point of playing little “mind games” with the whitetail, whether it be for educational purposes, or possibly the simple interest in the connection or the bonding between man and animal.

Where artificial baiting for deer is legal, many people have a specific interest or call it enjoyment, interacting with the deer in their own backyard convincing the animal to literally be fed out of their hand.

While in a natural state in the wild, there are also many games that a person will play with the intentions of convincing a deer to become attracted to a particular area. During breeding season, there are many hunters will claim that a particular commercial scent may be used to convince a deer to be drawn within close proximity. Meanwhile, others will swear by using an artificial call for a similar purpose of convincing a deer to become curious enough to investigate the situation.

I must admit that I too



Dale Streubel's trail cam photographs of bucks on mock scrapes.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOGRAPHS

enjoy getting “into their heads” when I feel it may be necessary. For example, this summer, I found myself devoted to scouting new areas in search of locating mature adult bucks. It always presents an enjoyable challenge for me, especially when pursuing, such a recluse animal existing in thousands of acres. If I'm fortunate enough to find an area that may strike my curiosity, then it will become my time to play games with the whitetail.

The first strategic move for me is to create a mock scrape, where a well-defined trail is either leading to a bedding area or to a particular feeding destination. As you can see in the photos from a couple of weeks ago, the licking branch that I suspended over the mock scrape will be checked on a daily basis by does and

bucks, depositing their forehead gland scent and also their pre-orbital scent on the hanging branch, simply as a scent post.

I have found that it is my quickest way to more or less take inventory on what deer may be in the area. Believe me, there are many times that an area may look promising, but to no avail. Instead of trying to convince yourself that the area may improve, you must follow your instincts and decide to move on. Personally, I have found the most effective method in order to gather intel in regards to the population in an area is to create a focal point, which becomes the center of communication for any deer that may inhabit the area.

If there are any bucks in the area, they seem to gravitate to a mock scrape the fastest. Eventually, as their

testosterone level increases, they will begin to paw at the scrape below the licking branch, and of course throughout the season, one buck will eventually claim the area over other subordinate bucks.

Keep in mind that deer living in our northern big woods are really not subjected to a variety of “gimmicks” created by humans as in more populated areas.

Therefore, when being introduced to anything unnatural in their area, they typically become curious. Basically, you are attempting to jump-start them entering the fall phase, mainly due to the fact that the deer up north tend to be less aggressive with the various physical sign-making habits, versus the deer in the agricultural areas where competition is at a higher level.

If for any reason you are

curious to know if there are any bucks in a specific area, or simply want to have fun in the woods behind your home, try creating a mock scrape, making sure that you have a licking branch suspended over a cleaned area of dirt. All it takes is to have one deer to deposit their scent in the area, and hopefully others will follow. You may also jump-start the area by purchasing some doe urine, which may be added to the scrape as an attractant.

Throughout the years, I have eventually produced my own liquid scent, which I will empty a pint container at every site, as in the photos above, which will enable the scent to last a little longer throughout inclement weather.

Good luck!

Any questions, email streubedale@gmail.com.

NYDHC

From page 26

not harvest a deer to attend, but all should register to be involved in the banquet.

The top three scoring deer from Archery, Crossbow and Gun categories will be awarded with special recognition at the banquet. The top scorer in the Mentored Hunt category will also receive special recognition. Scoring ties will be broken by an office scorer using the Pope and Young scoring system.

The banquet is a great place for youth hunters and their families to meet other youth hunters, have some fun, and celebrate another great deer hunting season. It is a true family-oriented event aimed at families who love to spend time in the woods hunting together.

Registration closing date

Any deer harvested after Dec. 5 will only have until Dec. 15 to be registered with the NYDHC. The final day for registration with the contest will be Dec. 15 at 5 p.m. The 10-day rule expires on December 5.

For more information, call Balie and Travis Strasburg at North Country Taxidermy, 715-356-4273.

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February 2023 Wetland Science Conference announced

Return to a full in-person format in Stevens Point

By Beckie Gaskill
OF THE LAKELAND TIMES

This winter's Wetland Science Conference was recently announced by the Wisconsin Wetlands Association. The conference will be held at the Holiday Inn Hotel and Convention Center in Stevens Point from Feb. 21-23, 2023. A recent press release highlight some important dates in regards to the conference.

Special Session proposals

The first important date is Oct. 17, 2022. This is the submission date for all proposals for special sessions for this year's conference. This category includes proposals for roundtable conversations, symposia, working groups and workshops.

Roundtable conversations are discussion-focused. While the roundtable leader provides the framework for that discussion, active engagement by all attending is the focus.

Symposia are “planned sessions with curated content and speakers on special topics that support the conference theme.” These submissions can include oral presentations, panel discussions or open discussions. Symposia further information sharing on current critical wetland issues.

Working groups are targeted at focused topics and allow attendees to discuss issues and concerns with those facing similar challenges. Working groups can also be used to develop ac-



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOGRAPH

The Wetland Science Conference, hosted by the Wisconsin Wetlands Association, is set for February 21-23, 2023. The conference will be held at the Holiday Inn Hotel and Convention Center in Stevens Point. Submissions for special sessions and general sessions are currently open.

tion plans on specific topics. Facilitators provide the framework for the session, but they may also include a formal presentation to kick off the discussion.

Workshops provide more of a “hands-on” environment where attendees have the opportunity to learn and apply new skills and methodologies. Length and timing of workshops is flexible, but all will be in-person this year. Instructors and facilitators for workshops should be procured by the organizer(s).

General Session abstracts

The second important date is November 15, 2022. This is the date general session abstracts are due. These include 15-minute oral presentations,

as well as 5-minute presentations for the “lightning round” talks. Poster presentations are also included in this category. Decisions on submissions for special sessions will be made by the end of Dec. 21, 2022.

Oral presentations will be accepted regarding wetland research, restoration and management. Other oral presentation categories are those related to communication, education or policy making.

Poster presentations, according to a recent press release, include anything that would be appropriate for an oral presentation. Poster presentations, however, offer a platform allowing for an extended informal discussion and

See **Wetland**. . . page 31