

FOOD PLOT PLANNING FOR DEER

ADVENTURE PRESS

HUNT. FISH. EXPLORE. LIVE.

SPRING 2018 | ISSUE 13

NATIVE
AMERICAN
ARTIFACTS

Nikki
Boxler

HEALED
By Hunting

4TH ANNUAL WOMEN'S
+ TRAIL CAM
CONTEST

Fishing for LEGENDS

TIPS FOR CATCHING AND RELEASING MUSKY



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editor's note

SOMETHING FOR THE FIRST TIME

When was the last time you did something for the first time? If you are a fan of country music like me, you know that's coming straight out of Darius Rucker's mouth, but it's something I really do live by. Sometimes we choose to try something new, sometimes



it's suggested to us and sometimes it's forced upon us, but no matter which reason why, continuously being fearless to try something new is going to enrich your life. We often underestimate ourselves, and you'll realize you can do a lot more than you think. Give yourself some credit!

And back to that word, 'fearless' - while the correct definition means without fear, in

real-life terms, I see being fearless as having fear, doubts, worries, nerves, etc., but choosing to overcome or take on something anyways. That's powerful... more powerful than truly lacking fear.

Life is precious, so you'd think it'd be easy for us all just to jump in and try something new, but sadly it's often not because we are worried about what other people will think. This seems to especially ring true for women. And while I think outdoors(wo)men are more likely to be the kind who will try something new, when women are new to the outdoors, I think they are often even more hesitant. I believe this is where good role models are so important because we see other women accomplishing really cool things, and for one, it breaks that 'it's just for guys' barrier, and two, it inspires us to try it as well! And that's why I believe in ADVENTURESS with my whole heart. Hope you enjoy this issue!

Jennifer Pudenz

ADVENTURESS

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SPRING 2018

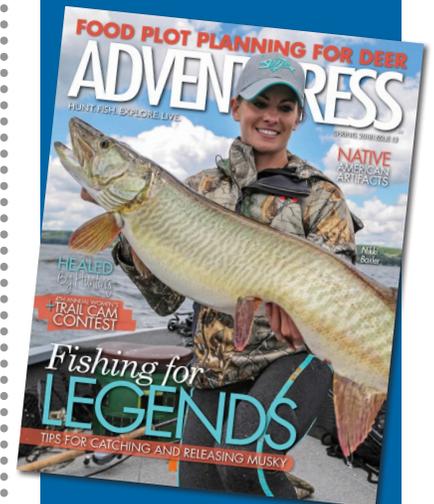
Founder & Editor
JENNIFER PUDENZ

FEATURED
PHOTOGRAPHER
Jessica DeLorenzo

CONTRIBUTORS
Nikki Boxler
Shannon Beck
Sarah Honadel
Deanna Lucas
Erin Stewart

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on the cover



Cover featuring
Nikki Boxler. Check out
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Cover Girl

NIKKI BOXLER

Growing up on a large dairy farm in western New York and continuing to reside there today, *Nikki Boxler* credits this setting for shaping her love for the outdoors... a passion that drives her to spend as much time hunting and fishing as possible.

Nikki's dad introduced her to hunting and fishing when she was young and she quickly embraced the lifestyle, falling in love with it because of the camaraderie and bond she experienced between fellow outdoorsmen. Nikki hopes to inspire and educate youth to become more involved in the hunting and fishing tradition.

"One of my goals is to get more women and young girls involved in the outdoors because I know firsthand that being active in the outdoors can change a person's entire perception on life," says Boxler.

Nikki is featured as one of the hosts on the digital series *Winchester Life* and is sponsored by *Winchester* and *Traeger*. See more of Nikki at nikkiboxler.com.



+Past Issues



<< Lots of great information in last year's spring issue, including bear hunting, gourmet bear burger recipe, crappie fishing, finding wild ramps, outdoor yoga and more!

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Jessica DeLorenzo

Featured
photographer

NEW GROWTH

An elk in fresh velvet soaking in the rays and grazing on the spring buffet near Prospect Peak in the Washburn Range of Yellowstone National Park.

Follow Jessica on **Instagram**, **Facebook** and check out **delorenzo photo.com!**

HUNT.



HEALED BY HUNTING

A special turkey hunting story by Shannon Beck

My husband, Brian, was a police officer, who was killed in the line of duty on January 23rd, 2014. For years beforehand, he had told me when he died, have some of his ashes put in a shotgun shell and kill a turkey with it.

I remember asking, “What if I miss?”

“It won’t matter. I’ll be out there where I want to be,” Brian said.

As I laid in bed recovering from a

hysterectomy, depressed and riddled with grief, I began wondering what my purpose in life was and going down a dark path. My mind kept taking me back to the idea of the hunt... if I could just fulfill his wishes, life would be okay.

I got on Facebook and searched for turkey hunts in western Oklahoma. The first post I found was a guy wanting to trade a spoonbill fishing trip in eastern Oklahoma for a turkey hunt in western Oklahoma. This caught my



eye because Brian had this arrangement with one of his best friends Jerad Langley in eastern Oklahoma.

I scrolled through the comments and noticed a lady named Cassie had tagged her brother, Kip Peck. I clicked on his name and saw some of his harvest photos and a picture of his daughter. I thought to myself that he seems harmless and sent him a crazy message about arranging a turkey hunt.

To my surprise, Kip answered right away and said he could take me in two days! I knew I couldn't go because my surgery had been just four days before. I thought I had lost my opportunity, but he said no worries and suggested the next Saturday. I said, "Deal!" I was going to do whatever it took.

I met Kip that Saturday on the side of the road in Binger before daylight. I introduced myself and hopped in his truck, off to fulfill a wish with two very special shells. We walked quite a ways to the blind and then had an owl roosted on the tree we were under. Every time the owl would hoot, we could hear a gobble.

When daylight cracked, we heard a gobble

and fly down. Kip called just one time to him and that old turkey made a mad dash for us! Through the tears, I put the sight on him and jerked the trigger back... I missed!!

Heartbroken and defeated, I dropped my head and fought back more tears. Not only had I failed, but I had wasted this stranger's time. I felt a gentle squeeze on my leg and looked up through the tears.

"Turn around," Kip said. "He is right behind you."

I turned around in that blind like a bull in a china closet - hitting my shotgun on everything! But the bird didn't take flight - he just stood there almost like he knew.

Through the tears, I eased the trigger back - BANG! And then watched him flop! I ran out and put my hands on the bird - thanking him, thanking God

and thanking Brian for leaving me with this task.

I've hunted most of my adult life, but this hunt saved my life! There is so much healing in hunting, and so much more to it than killing an animal.

~ *Shannon Beck* of Texas.



Thank you to Kip Peck!





A mature doe harvested off a food plot of clover edged with rows of standing corn.

HUNTRESS VIEW HIGHLIGHT

FOOD PLOT PLANNING

By Sarah Honadel *for deer hunting*

Some seed brands want you to think establishing a good deer food plot is as easy as throwing out a bag full of seed mix and watching the deer come running. However, truly establishing a good food plot takes time and planning. The following are some tips to help you get started!

HUNT.

THE RIGHT LOCATION

Depending on your property, you might have limited options on where to plant a food plot, but you still need to select the right location. First of all, selecting a spot near bedding areas will give your plot an advantage, and if you can combine that with a water source nearby – even better! But either way, make sure the area gets enough morning sunlight so the plants will grow, but not too much hot afternoon and evening sun, if possible.

Deer will want to have a way to get to and from your food plot without breaking their cover. If you're planting near a wooded area, corn or tall grass is a great addition around the perimeter to give deer an easy transition from the woods to the field. This cover can also help you when it comes to hunting in the fall seasons.



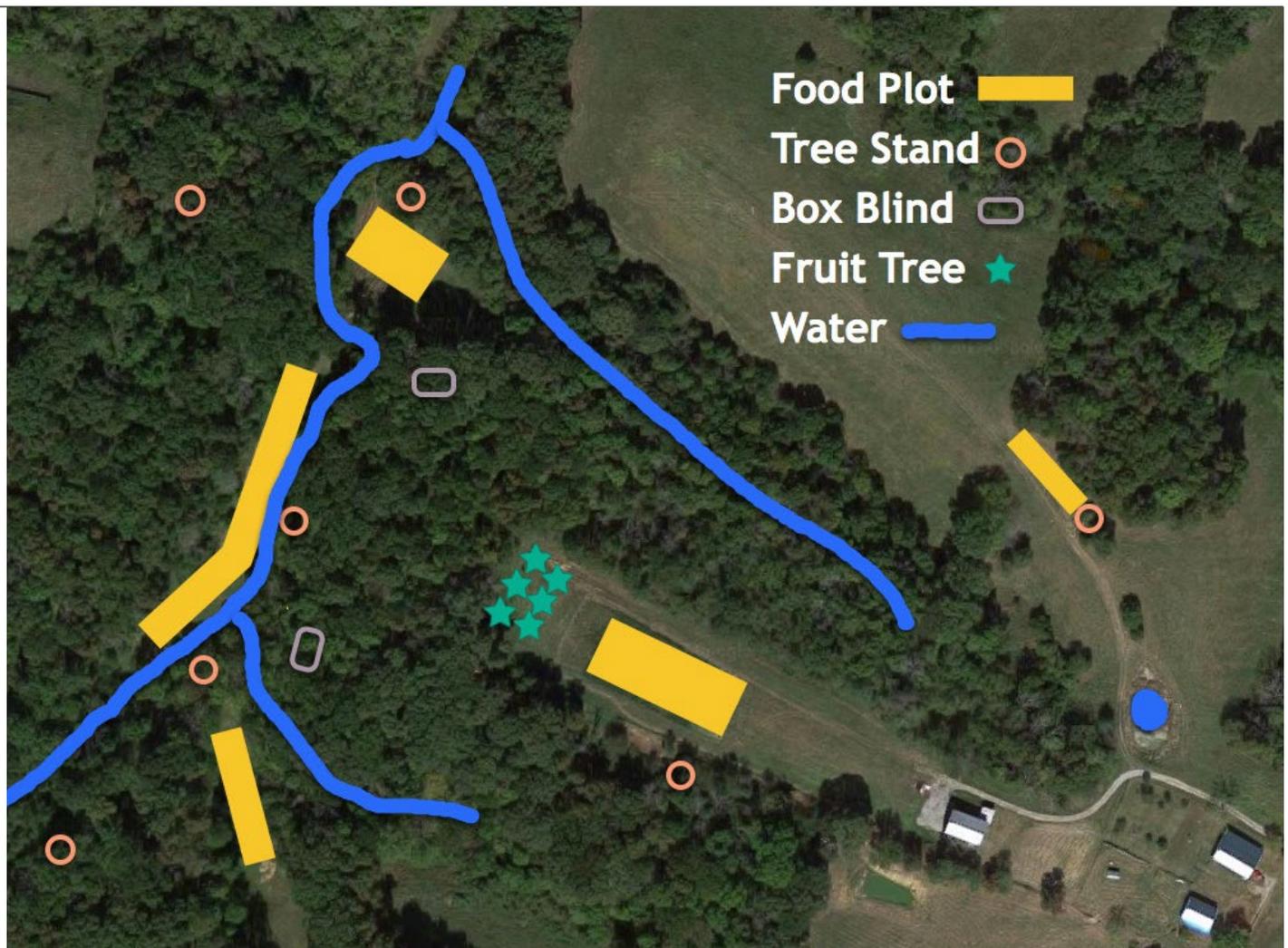
Author Sarah Honadel harvested this doe off one of her food plots.

Last, pay attention to the normal wind patterns on your property. Although the wind will change, pick a spot where you can normally get into your stand with the wind in your face. Additionally, make sure you have a spot where you can place your tree stand or blind upwind of the food plot. Also, don't forget hunting opportunities where deer are moving to and from your food source to bedding or water.

SIZE AND SHAPE MATTER

When selecting your food plot location, consider the size of the food plot. Too small and your crops might not grow well or survive to maturity—especially if you have a decent deer population. Too big and you end up with more maintenance than you want, deer that are too cautious to enter or when they do enter, they will likely be out of range for a shot. Most hunters would agree that a ½-acre to 2-acre food plot is plenty.

As for shape, is there really one shape that's



superior to the rest? After some research, I’ve found there are three primary shapes that tend to be favorites:

- Long and thin – The basic idea of this design is to keep the distance across the width within bow range. This design also allows you to do small sections of different crops.
- Hourglass – The basic idea of this shape is to place your tree stand near the pinch point forcing deer to pass you within range. It’s a good idea to put a stand on each side of the pinch point so you can hunt different wind directions.
- ‘L’, ‘V’ or Boomerang – This shape also takes advantage of the pinch point. Deer will typically feed along the “legs,” eventually feeding toward the bend.

TEST THE SOIL

Before you start planting, test your soil to ensure it has the right nutrients for your crops to grow. Planting a food plot without a soil test is likely going to result in slow growth, weeds and a lot of undesirable food options for deer.

Testing your soil is simple:

- You need a small clean plastic bag or bucket—anything that will hold dirt.
- Using a small garden spade or shovel, dig a few inches below in the sod line in your food plot and get about ¼ cup of dirt.
- Get six to eight samples from around the food plot and mix it all together.
- Take a scoop of that mix and put it in a new clean bag.



HUNT.

- Drop the soil off at your local extension office for testing. Let them know what you are planning to plant and they can make fertilizer recommendations specifically for your planned crops.

Keep in mind the following year you'll want to rotate crops to replenish nutrients. For example, soybeans take nitrogen from the soil, so you should rotate it with grass crops, such as corn or wheat, the next year.

DIVERSIFY CROP SELECTION

Different crops produce at different times of the year and draw deer at different times of the year, so it is crucial to plan this for when you will be hunting, whether it is early seasons, late seasons or both. If you want to make the most of your food plots, you'll need

Author Sarah Honadel finds turkey hunting success off of food plots.



Photo by featured photographer Jessica DeLorenzo.

to diversify the selection of food. Think of it as offering the deer a salad bar to choose from. Mix and match some of the following:

- Summer annuals, such as sunflowers, soybeans, sorghum and cowpeas.
- Fall and winter crops, such as kale, turnips and wheat.
- Perennials, such as clover and alfalfa.

And a few bonus tips:

- A field of sunflowers can double for dove hunting and a field of clover can double for turkey hunting.
- Place a few fruit trees along the edge of your food plot to not only provide food, but also additional coverage. (Make sure to use tree protectors.)
- Pay attention to what grows naturally—



Photo by featured
photographer
Jessica DeLorenzo.



Andrea Crider, owner of **Huntress View**, checking her Browning trail camera.

if you have an abundance of clover on your property, you probably don't need to plant more.

- Consider the amount of deer on your property and plant crops that will replenish themselves once eaten down.

WATCH YOUR FOOD PLOTS

Throughout the growing season, be sure to keep an eye on your food plots for a couple of reasons. Identify what is growing good, what is not and what the deer are eating before it matures. Take these into consideration for future years of planning and planting. Also look for tracks to determine high traffic areas so you can make decisions on blind and/or tree stand placement.

After the time and money you've spent to establish a food plot, I recommend spending a

little more to set out trail cameras so you truly get the full effect of how wildlife are using and moving through your food plot. Trail cameras often have settings for food plots so you not only gather what is happening up close, but also catch deer movement in the distance. This will help you better understand your food plot so you can make the most of your hunting strategies – helping it all come together and pay off in the end.

~~~

*Sarah Honadel is an avid outdoorswoman from Kentucky, now living in Idaho, who enjoys hunting turkey, deer and elk. Follow her on Instagram: @waddysarah and @arrowridgecreations. Thanks to **Huntress View** for permission to share this article.*



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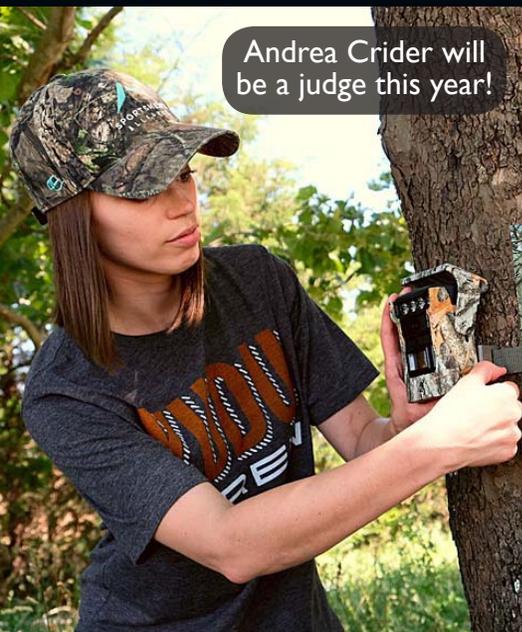
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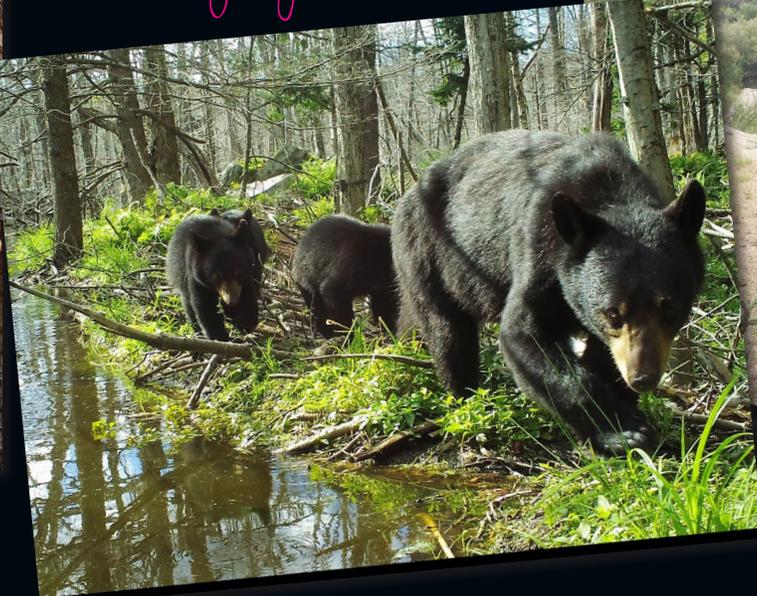
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# FISHING FOR LEGENDS

A large musky fish is being held by a person's hands over a black fishing net. The fish is silver with a dark, spotted pattern along its back and sides. The background shows a river with green foliage on the banks under a bright sky.

*Tips for catching and releasing musky*

**By Nikki Boxler**

## FISH.

If you follow me on social media, it will come as no surprise that I love musky! Not only are they my favorite species of fish, they are the ones I primarily target throughout the season. However, if you're looking for easy, non-stop action or want to fill the cooler with fish that you can take home and grill, then musky fishing might not be for you. If you're the kind of the person who enjoys putting in the work and grinding it out for potentially only one fish, this might be just the thing for you!

I tend to think musky fishing is a lot like bowhunting; it may potentially be hours upon hours of sitting around for just a brief frenzy of action, but once it does happen, the reward is always worth it. Musky fishing is about the thrill of outwitting one of the most ferocious predators in the freshwater world.

The questions I had about musky fishing when I first started are often the same questions I am asked today. I will cover some of those questions and the basics, so you have an understanding of musky fishing, which will aid you when you finally land your first musky!

### IDENTIFYING A MUSKY

When I post photos of musky on social media, I get a lot of "that's a nice pike" since some anglers have trouble telling these fish apart. After all, musky and northern pike do belong to the same family and share a lot of similarities. However, there are two basic clues to look for when determining the difference between a pike and a pure-strain musky:

1.) Musky can have barred, spotted or have almost no markings at all (depending on which strain they are), while pike almost always have



**FOR MUSKY, ANY MARKINGS WILL BE DARKER THAN THE BACKGROUND COLOR OF THE BODY.**

### *Northern Pike*





markings on them. For musky, any markings will be darker than the background color of the body. Adult pike always have white or light colored spots against a dark body color.

2.) The fins - looking at the fins is another easy indicator of whether the fish is a pike or a musky. A musky's pelvic and tail fins have pointed tips, while a pike's have rounded pelvic and tail fins.

Tiger musky, the hybrid between a pike and a musky, may add a little confusion to the matter, but they can be easily identified as they have characteristics all to their own! Tiger musky display stunning, thick vertical stripes, making it easy to see where they get the "tiger" name from. The easiest way to decipher a tiger musky from a musky is the combination of the thick vertical stripes and rounded pelvic and tail fins.



# FISH.

## RELEASE TOOLS AND WHY?

In musky fishing, the release tools are considered the most important components you can own, especially when catch and release is the primary goal amongst the devoted anglers. This reminds me of another question I am often asked, “How do they taste?” I’ve never eaten one, and here’s why:

- They are a long-lived apex predator - Musky can live upward of 15 to 25 years in certain systems, which gives them a longer time to accumulate toxic material, such as mercury in their tissues. In comparison, Chinook salmon (a commonly eaten apex predator fish) can reach adult size within three years, thus accumulating far less toxins. Simply put, if you’re after fish you can eat, there is no sense in choosing musky when you have other far more delicious choices like perch, walleye or crappie!

- They occur in low density - In comparison to other species, musky occur in far fewer numbers and are therefore a much more limited recreational resource!

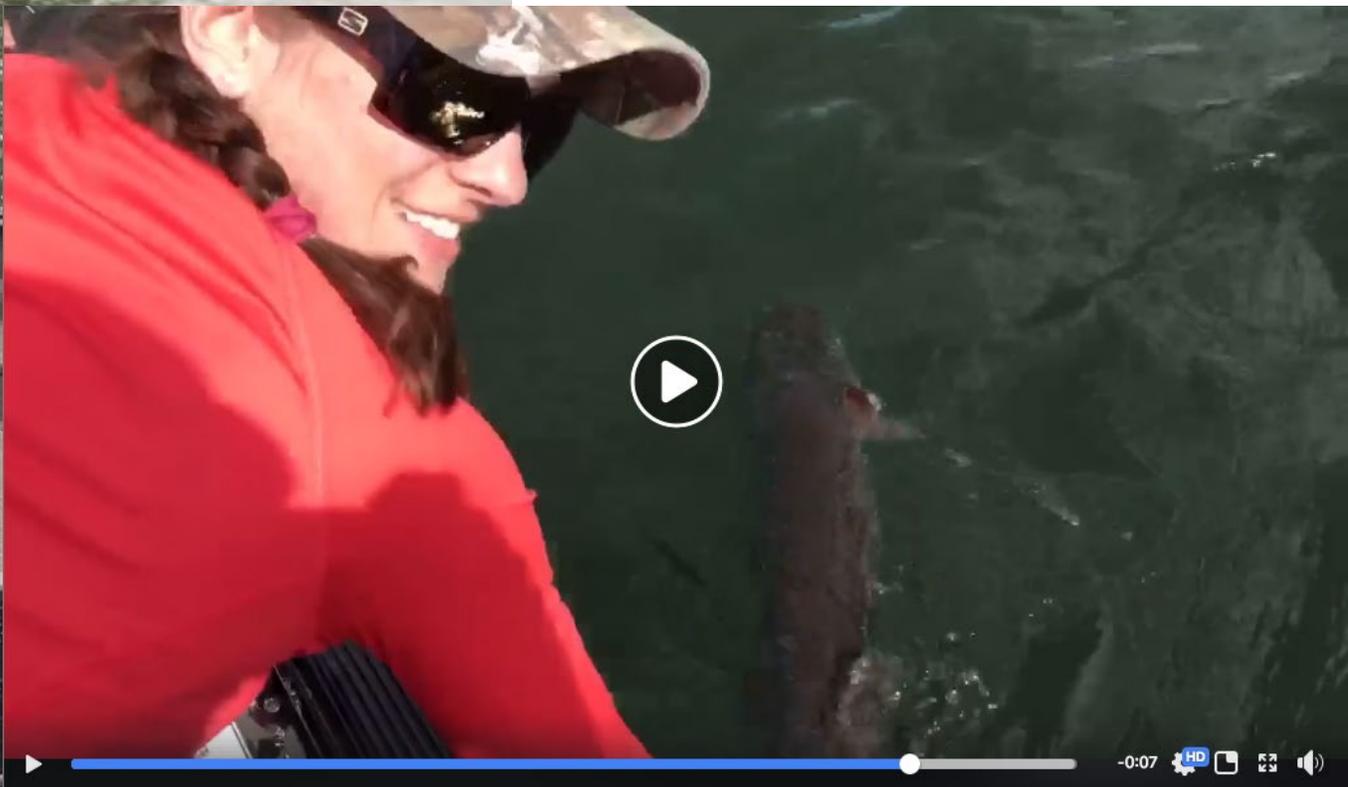
- Ecosystem health - On top of their recreational value, musky play a vital role in maintaining the health and balance of the ecosystems in which they exist and should be respected as such!

For anyone looking to get into musky fishing, please consider investing in a good quality large rubber-coated net, long-handled pliers and quality bolt cutters.

**BIG NET:** Find a net specifically designed for holding musky - it should have a large diameter with a deep rubber-coated bag. The deep bag allows the net



**IN MUSKY FISHING,  
THE RELEASE TOOLS  
ARE CONSIDERED THE  
MOST IMPORTANT  
COMPONENTS YOU  
CAN OWN ...**



**ABOVE LEFT:** Nikki Boxler using a large net specifically designed for musky with a deep rubber-coated bag for handling the fish.

**ABOVE RIGHT:** Catch and release is extremely important for musky fishing. Click to watch a video of Nikki handling a musky in the boat from the net to photos to release!

handle to be laid over the boat gunwale while keeping the fish safely in the water, which is important in order to ensure safe handling and safe release. Bringing the fish into the boat and letting it flop on the carpet will remove the slime coating that protects the fish and could increase the likelihood of post-release mortality; it also increases the odds of getting a large hook in your hand or foot! Brands like Drifter Tackle and Frabill offer great musky net options.

**LONG-HANDLED PLIERS:** If you have ever seen a musky, one of the first things you will notice is their impressive set of sharp teeth serrated on all edges! Therefore, long nose pliers will allow you to safely unhook the fish without your hand getting too close to their teeth.



The author, Nikki Boxler,  
with another incredible musky!





Nikki introducing others to musky fishing and showing proper handling during a girls fishing trip.

**HOOK CUTTERS:** Often times, hook removal can become difficult after a musky throttles your big wooden jerkbait covered with size 7/0 treble hooks - this is when hook-cutting is absolutely necessary for both your safety and the well-being of the fish. Instead of risking increased time out of the water and increased damage to the jaw and tissue, cut the hooks when necessary to get the fish released as soon as possible. Hooks are easily replaced and this is a small price to pay to help ensure that musky can be caught again!

### **PROPERLY HOLDING A MUSKY**

If you are lucky enough to land a musky, chances are you will want to get a picture holding it. This is where a large net is not only beneficial for the fish, but it also gives you a moment to organize the boat after the chaos and prepare for a brief photo opportunity! Before lifting the musky out of the net, have the camera ready and the boat clean of all stray hooks and rods.

When lifting the fish, support the belly with your hand, holding it horizontally close to your body. Do NOT hold them vertically





**VIDEO:** Click to see some of Nikki’s musky fishing setups and lures!

Another great option to shorten the learning curve is to hire a guide, but do not hire a guide with the sole expectations of guaranteed fish. Instead, view it as an opportunity to learn sound fundamentals with the added bonus of connecting with a fish or two if the bite is on! It doesn’t matter if you are a beginner or an advanced fisherman, you will always come back with more knowledge than you started with, which makes it money well-spent!

**... BUT DO NOT HIRE  
A GUIDE WITH THE  
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INSTEAD, VIEW IT AS  
AN OPPORTUNITY  
TO LEARN SOUND  
FUNDAMENTALS ...**

Knowing the basics will help with being prepared for connecting with that fish of a lifetime. I realize this article may describe musky fishing as more of a chore than fun-filled enjoyment, but once you get hooked on the musky bug, you will understand! Good luck on the water this summer, and tight lines!

~~~

Nikki Boxler is the cover girl for this issue. Read more about Nikki in her bio on page 6 and at her website, www.nikkiboxler.com.

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ADVENTURES

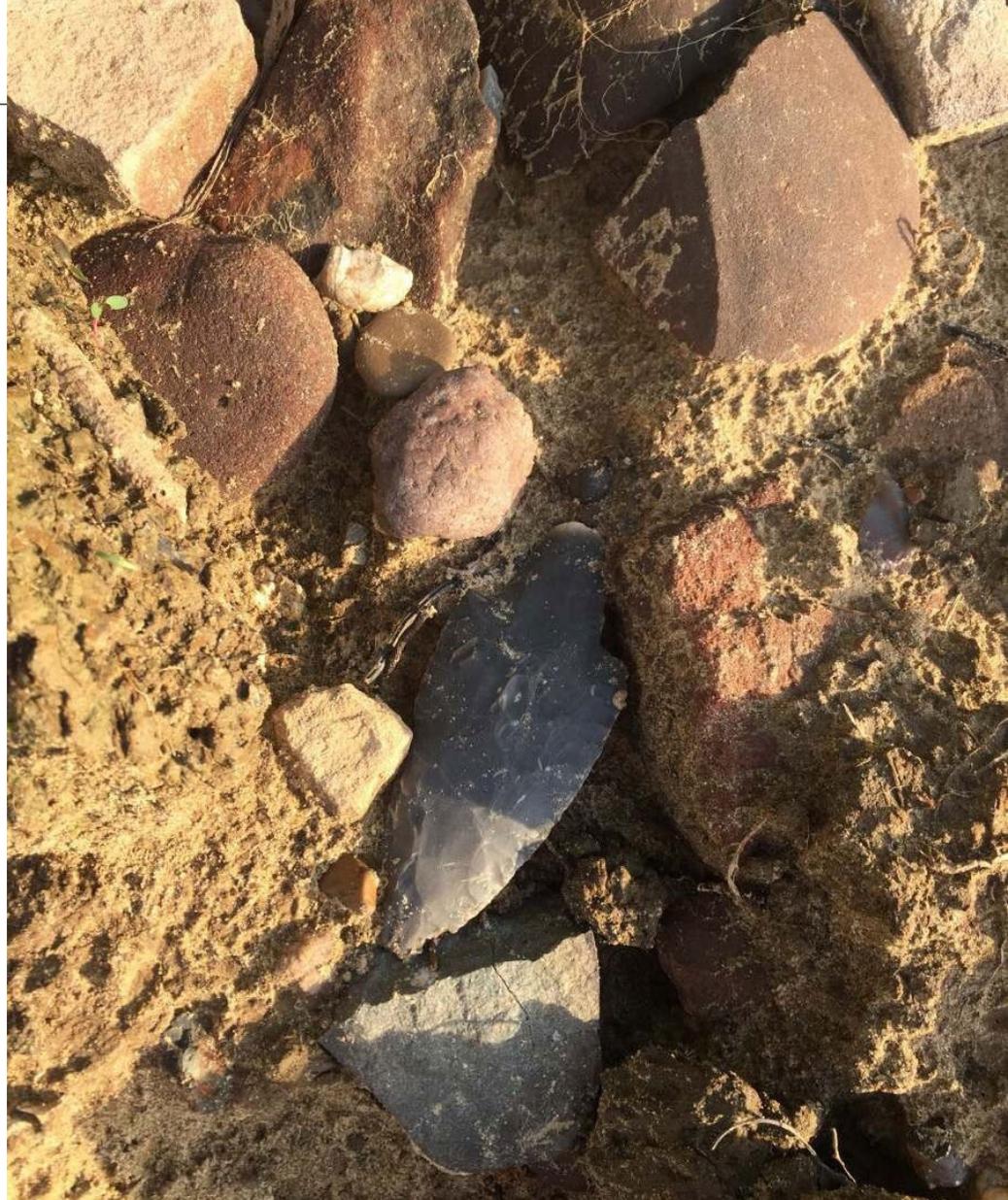
Tips on finding and identifying arrowheads

— By Deanna Lucas —

For some, hunting for arrowheads or Native American artifacts means nothing, but to me, it is actually one of my favorite hobbies that I was introduced to at a very young age. Growing up in the great state of Kentucky where Native American artifacts are known to be plentiful all over the state has been a bonus for me.

My love of these artifacts began when I was just a young girl walking the riverbanks and creeks with my family. My dad would spot one in the sand or in a pile of debris and point it out to me to show me what I was looking for. As any kid would be, I was amazed at these unique rocks we would find. The detail and work put into these rocks is truly mind blowing.

A lot of times when picking them up, I'll think to myself how the last person to touch these rocks was a Native American hundreds, or even thousands, of years ago that carefully made it and depended on it. Over the years, I've learned they are not just 'arrowheads' as each shape and color has its own name and type, and successfully finding arrowheads takes more than many people think,



such as a good eye, skill, patience and a bit of luck.

TIME & LOCATION

I've come to realize that you never really know where you may find one. For some, finding arrowheads comes easy while others may find it difficult or even impossible, but being familiar with them, knowing where to look and what to look for makes it a little easier.

Water was a necessity for Native Americans to survive so the majority of their camps were located near some type of water source, whether it was a large river, creek or small natural spring. Some Indian camps were used continuously for hundreds of years, while others might have only been used briefly; these areas are a good place to start looking for relics.

One of the better times





of year to find them is in the spring when floods may occur and the current of the water moves debris and erodes the river banks revealing what lies underneath. When the water levels go down and the riverbanks settle, you are more likely to spot an arrowhead poking out of the bank or lying in the new sand. Same goes for creeks - after a hard rain, the rushing water through the creek bed is going to reveal new rocks and shift the ones already there.

Freshly plowed crop fields in some areas will even have artifacts in them especially after a hard rain when some of the dirt is washed away. Native Americans usually picked an

**WHEN THE
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area of higher ground away from flooding and sheltered from the weather, such as caves or overhangs (cliffs), to live so there is a good chance artifacts can also be found near these areas.

Browsing for information (local library, Internet, museums) on any Native American history in your area might help you find land where Native Americans lived on and increase your chances of finding remnants. However, even if there's no history of Native Americans living on the land you're searching, you may still have luck finding arrowheads there. And of course, if you're not hunting on your own land, make sure you have owner's permission. Also remember it is illegal to take any arrowheads you find on state parks, national forests and Native American reservations.



You might be lucky enough to find other artifacts such as axes, tomahawks, banner stones and celts.

EXPLORE.

HOW TO SPOT

When searching, you'll want to slowly scan the ground with your eyes peeled for that triangular arrowhead shape. But keep in mind they are not always going to be perfect whole points. A lot of times you will find broken pieces, so also look for characteristics such as anything with sharp edges and flaked surfaces.

Sometimes there is a good chance you will find more than one in the same area, especially if it was an area where they camped at

or lived. It is always a good idea to thoroughly check the area when you find one, and always flip over or check each rock because you never know when one could be just barely covered.

ARTIFACT MATERIALS

Native Americans made arrowheads using a chipping process called "knapping." In our area of north central Kentucky, the most common materials they are made from is flint and chert. Flint and chert can be many different colors

and Native Americans made artifacts all different sizes, but they are most often triangular-shaped with a sharp point, and are sometimes but not always, notched at one end.

Flint is a sedimentary rock that has potential to break into small fragments and can be shaped easily, making it have sharp edges ideal for cutting and scraping objects. Chert is also a very hard and durable rock that when broken, the edges are very sharp and tend to retain the sharpness.

Other commonly known artifacts are axes, tomahawks,

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Author Deanna Lucas with one of her display cases of amazing finds.



VIDEO: Lots of Native American artifact finds by **Brit Corbin** and **Josh Corbin** while shed hunting!

banner stones and celts. These are what we call “hard stone” pieces and are usually made from granite, slate or other metamorphic rocks. These are not as common as finding arrowheads, but you still may run across one while searching.

WHAT NOW?

Since some artifacts can be worth large amounts of money, some people buy and sell them, but if you’re like me, you can display them in specially made cases to admire and keep them forever. Some areas host arrowhead shows where you can show off your collection or just go

to see everyone else’s. These shows are also a great place to gather information and tips from other collectors.

Even if you are not specifically arrowhead hunting, it’s a great thing to keep in the back of your mind during other outdoor adventures such as hiking, shed hunting and mushroom hunting.

After all these years, the memory and joy of finding my first arrowhead is still with me and every new one I find just fuels me to find more. There’s no perfect answer as to where exactly you will find them, and I wish I could say it was easy to find them,

Even if you don’t have any luck finding artifacts, you’re sure to find some cool rocks in the process! Check out the next page for some DIY rock project ideas!

but that’s not always the case as some days I come home empty handed. However, that doesn’t discourage me because I know they are there - you just have to find them.

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*Deanna Lucas of Kentucky was introduced to the outdoors way of life at an early age and since then has become extremely passionate about hunting and the outdoors.*



# ROCK MAGNETS

By Erin Stewart

**H**ave you ever brought home cool rocks from a walk or vacation, but ended up putting them in a drawer and then forgetting about them? These rock magnets are a unique way to display your findings. They also make neat presents and stocking stuffers. What's also awesome about these magnets is they are super easy, inexpensive and you don't have to be crafty to make them. Below are the instructions for making your DIY rock magnets!

### What Else You'll Need:

- Magnets
- Clear Spray Paint
- Hot Glue Gun & Glue Sticks

### What You'll Do:

- Find small rocks you personally like. I prefer petoskey stones and agates for magnets. Lighter rocks hold up better on the fridge.



- Wash and scrub rocks to get all dirt off, and let dry.

- Place rocks on scrap paper and spray a layer of clear paint on each of the rocks. (The clear spray paint gives them a polished/wet look without polishing and or tumbling them.)

- Once dry, take warmed hot glue gun and put a small dot of glue on one side of the magnet and then place it on the flat side of the rock.

- Once dry, your ready to hang them up! Enjoy!

*Another idea - Swap the magnets for earring backs!*



## REVITALIZED

*An American bison lounging in spring after the harsh Wyoming winter in Yellowstone National Park.*

JESSICA DELORENZO

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





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