

WILDLIFE TRACK IDENTIFICATION ADVENTURE PRESS™

HUNT. FISH. EXPLORE. LIVE.

WINTER 2019 | ISSUE 16

CELEBRATING
HARDWATER
WOMEN!

+Recipe
FISH
CAKES

SPEARING
PIKE!
THROUGH THE ICE

Sarah Kowalewski >>

TURKEYS
BEFORE, DURING
& AFTER THE HUNT



PRISM^{SERIES}

Cutting edge outwear means outlasting and out-fishing the guys, and the Prism suit has the toughness and insulation as our best men's offerings. With reflective elements and Sureflote[®] flotation integrated into the build, this suit feels good both literally and figuratively. Additional features like 1600D Snakeskin waterproof knees, a drop-seat design, an interior cell phone pocket, and a 210T poly-tricot lining make the Prism a suit that no female angler can do without.

GO EARLY. GO LATE. GO PREPARED.™

**150g Sureflote[®]
Insulation**

Drop Seat Design

Waterproof Knees



FOR MORE INFORMATION | STRIKERBRANDS.COM

150g Thermadex®
Insulation

POLARIS
RANGER
XP

STRIKERICE
GO EARLY. GO LATE. GO PREPARED.™



INTRODUCING THE
**SIGNATURE
HD**
Series



Take glassing to a higher level with the Burris' Signature HD Series. High-performance HD lenses and BaK prisms produce sharper images and edge-to-edge clarity. Step up your game with legendary Burris optics. Performance and reliability you can trust.

Burris
FIND WHAT MATTERS

SIGNATURE HD BINOCULARS

8x42, 10x42 or 12x50

- All lenses are fully multi-coated
- Waterproof, Fogproof
- Phase-corrected BaK roof prisms
- Open bridge design reduces weight

SIGNATURE HD SPOTTING SCOPE

20-60x85

- Built-in sun shade reduces glare
- Both coarse and fine focusing adjustment
- Adjustable Eyecup
- Lightweight, durable design
- Angled eyepiece
- Rotating tripod mount

★★★★★
FOREVER WARRANTY
★ NO QUESTIONS ASKED ★

BURRISOPTICS.COM

Winter 2019

Contents

6 Editor's Note

Overcoming obstacles - in the outdoors & in life

8 ADVENTURESS of the YEAR

2018 contest results - winners & finalists!

10 Your Photos

Celebrating hardwater women!

12 Pike Spearing

Tools of the trade for spearing pike through the ice by Sarah Kowalewski



20 Recipe: Pike Patties

With remoulade sauce by Chanda Gebhardt

24 Talking Tracks

Track identification important for any outdoors(wo)man by Skye Goode

34 Spring Turkey Tips

Before, during & after the hunt -
Huntress View Highlight by Sarah Honadel

43 More

Video: Ashley Rae's walleye of a lifetime, plus other articles from adventuressmagazine.com.



editor's note

Overcoming obstacles - in the outdoors & in life

Even if we don't share about the whole story on social media, there's always some kind of obstacle we overcome to end up smiling behind a harvest or a fish. Whether it's from your personal life, work or the outdoors itself, we all are overcoming at least one obstacle, big or small, just to be out there.



It can be mental, such as walking in for a morning hunt when you're afraid of the dark or bowhunting from a treestand when you have a fear of heights. It can be physical, such as, well, being a woman compared to men, a health issue, your age - young or old. And of course, it can be that in between, such as time and money. There are people who support and lift us up, but sometimes there are people who hold us back.

While I rarely share about my obstacles, they are there just like yours. However, even though there are obstacles to the outdoors, I've always found it's the outdoors that helps me overcome obstacles in life itself. Funny when you think of it that way.

While it's hard at the time, I'm glad for some obstacles - in the outdoors and in life - because they form us into who we are and show us what we are really capable of and what truly matters - the easy paths don't do that. No matter what you are struggling with, everyone is trying to overcome something - you are not alone. Here are some of my favorite sayings I remind myself of:

"It's the journey, not the destination."

"The man on the top of the mountain didn't fall there."

"There's something beautiful in the space between knowing and not knowing."

"Look back and be grateful, look ahead and be hopeful, look around and be helpful."

"Every day may not be good, but there is something good in every day."

"It will never be perfect. Make it work. -Life"

"You lack nothing. Use what I gave you. -God"

Jennifer Pudenz

ADVENTURESS

adventuressmagazine.com
adventuressmag.com
bettheadventuress.com

*The only magazine
tailored for
women who
hunt and fish!*

ISSUE 16 / WINTER 2019

Founder & Editor
JENNIFER PUDENZ

CONTRIBUTORS
Sarah Kowalewski
Chanda Gebhardt
Skye Goode
Sarah Honadel

HELP WANTED
Are you passionate about ADVENTURESS, and think you could learn to sell ads? Email inspire@bettheadventuress.com!

ADVENTURESS
is a magazine published digitally
four times per year:
Winter, Spring, Summer and Fall.
Available for free at
adventuressmagazine.com.

Don't miss an issue by subscribing
to the email newsletter on the
website and following social media:



On the Cover:
Sarah Kowalewski

ADVENTURESS TRADEMARK 2019. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

REGISTER NOW!



WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT ARCHERY RETREAT

This women's camp is designed to give you an outdoor experience like none other.

Join like-minded women to learn archery shooting and hunting skills, earn your Bowhunter Education certificate, build confidence and personal growth.

Learn tree stand safety, hunting from a ground blind, shot distance and angles, compete in a WOMEN'S ONLY 3D Archery Tournament and much much more!

Please visit www.raisedhunting.com/camps for more information.

JUNE 6-9, 2019

WINTERSET, IA

COST:

\$250

All Skill Levels Welcome!

Hosted by RAFD and
RMEF Iowa Chapter



ADVENTURESS



\$1,500
PRIZE
PACKAGE
WINNER!

2018 ADVENTURESS OF THE YEAR

Brooke Benham Wright
of Colorado



Individual Category Winners



HUNT.

KELLY COHEN
California



FISH.

COURTLYN SUSZKO
Manitoba, Canada



EXPLORE.

CARRIE RYDBERG
Wisconsin



LIVE.

IVY O'GUINN
Alaska

ADVENTURESS of the YEAR Finalists



ERIN DIEGEL
Colorado



CARRIE RYDBERG
Wisconsin



NANCY RODRIGUEZ
California



IVY O'GUINN
Alaska



KARI HIRSHBERGER
Washington



RUTH IRELAND
New York



KATELYN CERCIELLO
Pennsylvania



MICHELLE BENNETT
Utah



BECKY MAGDZAS
Wisconsin

THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING WHO MADE THIS CONTEST POSSIBLE!

**BURRIS OPTICS - MARTIN ARCHERY - PRETTY HUNTER
HUNTER'S BLEND COFFEE - BIG GAME GUT GLOVES
SOUTHERN RACKS - MADISON GAME CALLS - NATURE'S PAINT**



SAMANTHA
RASMUSSON



COURTNEY
BARBOUR

To Hardwater Women!

Follow **ADVENTURESS** on Facebook and post your recent photo to the page or follow **@adventuressmagazine** on Instagram and tag **#betheadventuress** to possibly be featured in ADVENTURESS social media or magazine!



LACEY
KASTERN



ANA
LESCHISHIN



CHRISTINE
KESSLER



SHAYNA
ROSE



KACEY
BECKENDORF



VAL
TESCH



ARIEL
DRUSCHEL



CHANDA
GEBHARDT



PIKE SPEARING

Tools of the trade for spearing pike through the ice

By Sarah Kowalewski

Four years ago, I first tried pike spearing, and once a pike's nose poked out from beneath the ice, I knew I was hooked. Even now, every time I stick a pike, it's like the excitement of the first time all over again! I picked up all of my pike-spearing skills from my boyfriend, Evan, which pike spearing is best done with the help of a buddy or group. Here are some of our tips on how you can get in on the rush of stabbing a pike!

LOCATION

Like any other kind of fishing, spearing requires you to put work into finding good spots. Unlike other fishing, being able to stab into a fish requires you to set up in shallow water. Depths can vary, but if you think you're spearing too shallow, you probably aren't. We have speared in areas ranging from 2 to 10 feet.

Shallow, sandy flats and points are great places to start, as well as any areas with weird abnormalities. It's okay to have some weeds in the hole, but not so many they hinder your spearing. Clear water is also helpful, so choose areas you know are calm and clear. If you have no choice, you can improve your visibility by putting eggshells or navy beans at the bottom of your hole. The contrast of lightness will help the fish's body stand out in the cloudy water.



The right tools for pike spearing are important. An ice auger as well as an ice saw helps tackle the challenge of cutting the large hole needed.



For pike, use a heavyweight seven-barb spear and attach a rope to the end of it.



LURE THEM IN

Decoys or baits are one of the most important aspects of spearing. I like to use decoys while I'm spearing – specifically, *PikeSpearing.com* PikeKilla Decoys. The decoys I use most are the 9-inch PikeKilla Yellow and the Classic Red & White. We attach the decoys to a pole or the shanty and jig the decoy so it appears to swim in a circle.

If decoys aren't your style, live suckers and baits like PikeKilla Lures are also great options. Don't be afraid to change colors and size up if you aren't happy with the activity. Some colors catch fish's attention more than others. There are unlimited decoy, lure sizes and color options to choose from, so you just have to see what works best for you!

STICK IT TO THEM!

Spears are easy to come by in most areas at your local sporting goods stores, and choosing the right spear is important. We

use a heavyweight, seven-barb spear for pike, and a smaller spear for species like whitefish and perch. Don't make the costly mistake of not having a reliable rope attached to the end of


your spear. We found paracord works great to recover your spear, and hopefully fish, back from the depths.

OTHER GEAR

Ice augers are a must, but I also recommend having an ice saw on hand. This will save

THE DECOYS I USE MOST ARE THE 9-INCH PIKEKILLA YELLOW AND THE CLASSIC RED & WHITE.





For spearing, you'll need to make large rectangular holes in the ice.



Since spearing doesn't (ethically) have a catch and release option, be sure to properly identify fish first, and even if it's legal, be mindful of game fish and trophy sizes that other anglers are practicing catch and release with for the future. We are all in this together!

AVOIDING ROOKIE MISTAKES

Spearing requires a lot of trial and error and mistakes so here a few tips to avoid them!

- Have a reliable rope attached to the end of your spear. We found paracord works great to recover your spear, and hopefully fish, back from the depths.
- Make sure to place the spear in the water before throwing - this reduces splash and also makes sure you hit your target better.
- Don't move too quickly when spearing in shallow water because pike's eyes are situated closer to the top of their head. Too much movement may tip them off and spook them.
- Keep shanty windows closed unless you need the light to tie or see. The light produces shadows and makes the pike more prone to seeing you and leaving.
- It's important to stay away from a pike's mouth and be careful when grabbing them by the gills. Their teeth can be big and sharp - they are predator fish, after all.

you time, and help you make bigger spearing holes. We usually make our holes about 3- by 2-foot large so we can see better and recover our fish easier.

While mid- to late mornings are usually our busy times when it comes to pike activity, spearing can quickly be made into an all-day endeavor, so having a warm shanty can come in handy. If you don't have a permanent shanty, I've found using a propane heater combined with square foam floor tiles inside an ice hut helps keep your feet off the ice and you comfy.

KNOW THE RULES!

Here in Michigan, the rules and laws can vary significantly from lake to lake so it's important to know where you're at and what is legal! Some lakes are open to any size fish and any

number, but most lakes have size and number restrictions. Common regulations here are fish 24 inches or bigger and two to five fish can be kept. There are multiple combinations of regulations varying from slot limits to having only one fish greater than 24 inches in your possession. Most states have sections in their fishing digests dedicated to spearing that give the details.

Keep an eye on season and possession dates as well! Designated Trout Lakes, Designated Trout Streams and Michigan-Wisconsin boundary waters are closed to spearing in Michigan. With spearing, it is important to know you are legal because throwing fish back isn't usually an option! It's also a possibility certain lakes are completely closed to spearing.

As with any other kind of fishing, a license

is usually required, physically on you while out in the shack. I can't count the number of times we have been checked by the Michigan DNR this year! Be legal, honest and truthful when it comes to your fishing!

IDENTIFICATION

Again, since spearing isn't a catch and release situation where you can throw fish back, it's crucial to correctly identify fish first. Pike can be identified by a single dorsal fin, light-colored spots on a darker body, upper half of gill covers and entire cheeks with scales, and five to six submandibular pores on the underside of the lower jaw.

Pike stay mostly in the shallows and reproduce in the spring. They primarily eat small fish, but on occasion, will eat frogs, crayfish, and small mammals and birds.

RS RAINSHADOW ALPS FORECAST

**EVERYTHING YOU NEED
FOR YOUR DREAM ROD!**

EVER FEEL LIKE YOUR ROD WAS NEVER QUITE RIGHT FOR YOU? THAT CAN ALL CHANGE WITH A CUSTOM BUILT FISHING ROD. BUILT TO YOUR ARM LENGTH WITH YOUR FAVORITE STYLE GRIPS AND YOUR FAVORITE COLORS. CUSTOM IS NOT OUT OF REACH.

GO CUSTOM BATSON
ENTERPRISES, INC.

RainShadowRodBlanks.com | ALPSForecast.com | BatsonEnterprises.com



Courtney Wilhelm
of North Dakota.
2018 ADVENTURESS of the
YEAR Contest submission.

They are most often confused with their cousins, the muskie.

TECHNIQUE

Spear placement is key - always aim for just behind the head, making your spear perpendicular to the fish's body. Place the spear just into the water before throwing it as this prevents the water from splashing and keeps your spear from deflecting. The shallower the water, the easier it is to hit your target.

CLEANING PIKE

One thing is for sure - get ready to get smelly! Pike are not the easiest species to clean, but it gets easier over time. Be sure to watch out for their bones - they have a lot of them! Although I haven't perfected any easy cleaning method, there's an endless amount of ways to clean them. YouTube videos are a great place to find help.

~ Sarah Kowalewski
of Michigan



ODU MAGAZINE™

North America's Largest 100% Digital Fishing Magazine

www.odumagazine.com

The Magazines Are FREE

Spring to Summer Transition Fishing Edition May/June 2015

Soft Plastic Time

Summer Fishing Continues July/August 2015

Late Summer Fishing Aug-Sept 2016

Catching Trophy Bass 101

Walleyes In Small Rivers

PREPPING FOR PIG

Sandy Toes & Salty

The "HOOCH" Below Lake Lanier



Pike Patties

with Remoulade Sauce

By Chanda Gebhardt of Field to Fork Minnesota Style

A lot of people enjoy cooking fish in many different ways. A couple years back, I started looking for different ways to prep fish. That's when I realized I could modify crab cakes into fish cakes! I have used this recipe for northern pike, walleye, crappies and fish leftovers.

This recipe is a bit less traditional, but uses the items I most commonly have in my fridge. You can also look online to find all sorts of crab cake recipes - pick one and make it your own!



PREPARATION:

- Start with cleaning the northern and removing all bones. Then soak overnight in water with sea salt.
- The next day or after the fillets have firmed up, boil water and add a can of 7UP or a bit of sugar. I like to sweeten the meat a bit for the cakes. This will only take a few minutes to cook them through. Then drain the liquid and place on paper towels to dry and cool.

REMOULADE SAUCE:

- 1 cup mayonnaise
- 1 tablespoon ketchup
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 2 teaspoons prepared horseradish
- 1 tablespoon of lemon juice
- 2 teaspoons Old Bay Seasoning (or similar)
- Tabasco Sauce, couple dashes depending on your spice level
- Mix together and chill.



+recipe

INGREDIENTS:

1 pound of northern (2 small fish or 1 larger)
1/4 to 1/3 cup of mayonnaise
1 teaspoon Old Bay Seasoning (or similar)
1 teaspoon of lemon juice/1 wedge squeezed
3/4 cup of panko bread crumbs
1 egg
4 green onions, chopped (save some for garnish)
fresh cracked black pepper, to taste
1/2 to 3/4 cup of shredded parmesan cheese
fish breading (Chef Robert's used here)
or more panko for the outside coating

DIRECTIONS:

- After prep and boiling of the northern, in a separate bowl, start to mix up mayonnaise, Old Bay Seasoning, lemon juice, panko bread crumbs, egg, green onions, pepper and shredded parmesan. Then fold in the crumbed northern. I like to gently add the fish and then patty them up.

- Put patties on parchment paper and freeze for 15 to 30 minutes. (They seem to hold together better this way when you go to pan-fry them.)

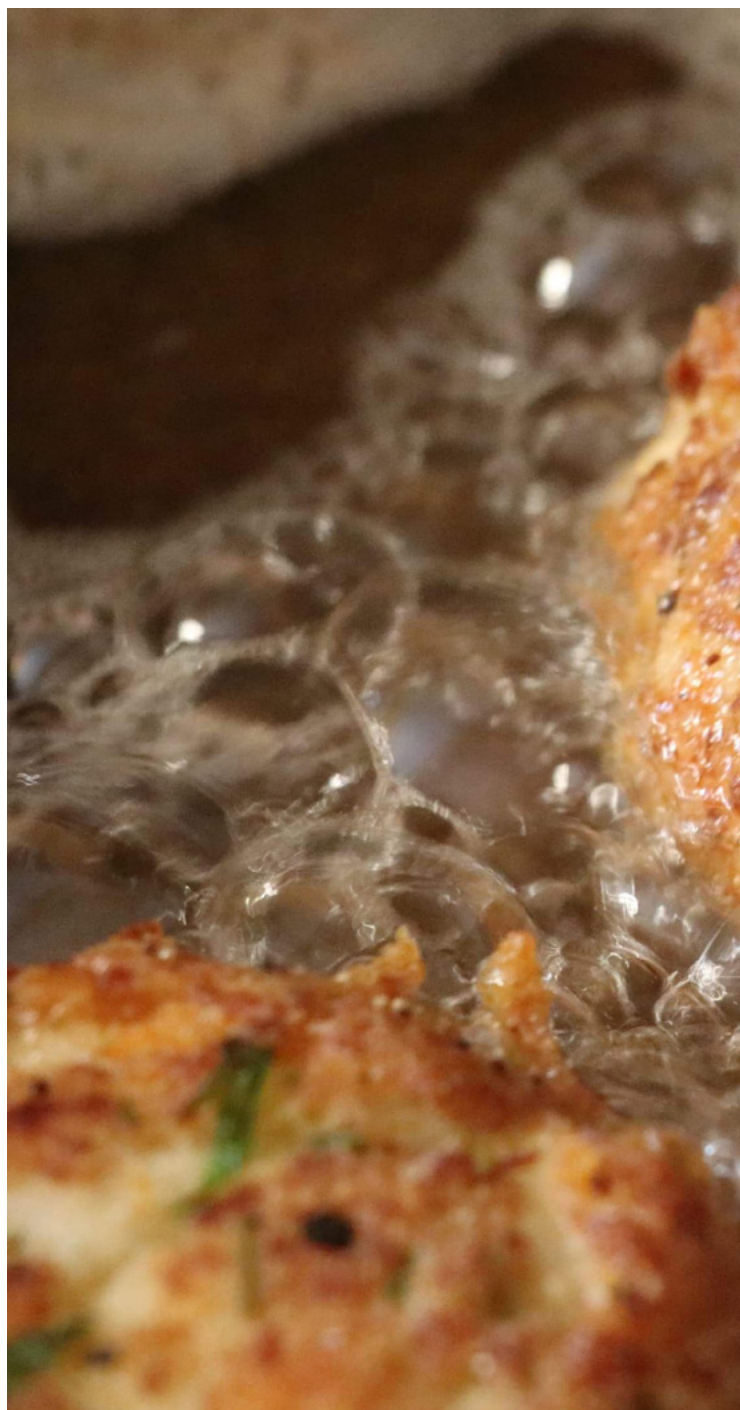
- Lastly, coat the patties in fish breading. This seals the cheese in and makes for a nice outside coating!

- Cook each side for 4 to 5 minutes. Should be a golden brown.

- Garnish with some of the saved green onions. Serve with the remoulade sauce immediately and enjoy!

~~~

**Find more recipes on Field to Fork Minnesota Style's Facebook page!**











# Talking Tracks

By Skye Goode

Track identification important  
for any outdoors(wo)man



I see it all the time on social media, “What track is this?” Track identification is a hobby of mine because it is one of the only sure things when it comes to scouting for animals. Tracks cannot appear out of nowhere; an animal must have walked by to make that track, and chances are, they will walk by again. If you are a trapper, you know the oldest word of advice is, “Set on sign.” All sportsmen, whether you turkey hunt, deer hunt, run hounds or trap, rely on animal tracks to up the odds that they will harvest that animal.

## CANINES

The most commonly misidentified track is someone thinking the neighbor’s black lab is a wolf running through their back yard. I’ll agree that wolf/dog/canine tracks can be very difficult even for the seasoned outdoorsman. The main points to look at for canine

tracks are toenail marks, bottom of the pad only having two lobes and the gait.

Domestic dogs will have a circular pattern to the overall track and the toes tend to spread out very wide. Usually they will have very long toenail marks because they don’t get wore down on the rocks like wild canines. On the other hand, wild canines such as fox and coyote will have an oval-shaped track, show just small toenail indents and the toes will not spread out, but rather be streamline. If you think of it in terms of evolution, our domestic dogs no longer need to hunt for their food, so



>> Example of how a large dog track might appear with a more circular and open pattern, plus more pronounced toenail marks.

<< Example of how a coyote track might appear with a more oval, streamlined pattern, and less toenail indents.



their feet are not conditioned to the terrain. If a coyote or fox’s toes spread out wide, they would never be able to keep up with prey and be successful hunters.

The difference in a coyote and a wolf track is only their size, as even a wolf pup will be twice the size of an adult

coyote. The gait on a wild canine compared to a domestic will look very different as well. Wild canines are built so their shoulders are the same width as their hips, therefore, their hind track will fall almost perfectly in line with their front track whether they are running or walking. However, domestic dogs come in all shapes and sizes, and tend to show all four tracks in a rectangular pattern within each stride. Wild canines also run in straight lines, often with a destination in mind, whereas domestic dogs meander all over the place and seem “clumsy” in their travel.



Black bear tracks.





## FELINES

Another animal you may see tracks from is a bobcat. The main points to determine a feline track are: they do not show toenail marks because their claws are retracted, the bottom of their pad has three lobes and their track is almost perfectly round. The average bobcat track will be twice the size of even the biggest feral tomcat, though the two tracks look almost identical. The back feet will fall in line with the front feet almost exactly, so it can appear the cat has only two feet!

Recently, a mountain lion walked through my hometown and the tracks were unmistakable; I would estimate the mountain lion tracks were nearly three times the size of the biggest bobcat I've ever seen. When I get asked if a track is of a wolf or a cougar, I usually tell them, "If you must ask, then it isn't. When you see one, you'll know!"

## MORE ANIMALS

Other critter tracks you may commonly encounter are fisher, who show all five toes as well as all four feet; otter, who show all five toes with slight webbing and tend to have slides accompanied between their tracks; raccoon, who will look almost exactly like a human hand and are side by side with back feet disappearing into front feet; skunk, which look like a very tiny bear track and are just a couple inches apart, and possums, which look like a coon track but their big thumbs stick out the side. Black bear tracks are very recognizable and will look like a human footprint with claws!



Raccoon tracks can look similar to tiny human hands.



Bobcat tracks.



The author with mountain lion tracks.



Mountain lion/cougar tracks.





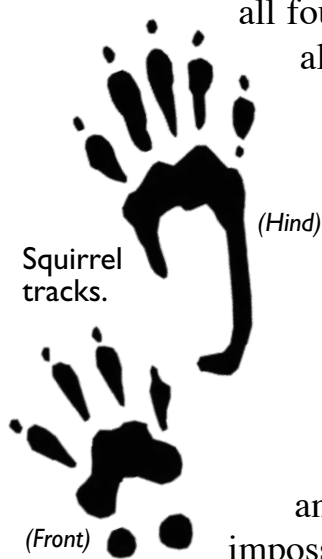
Author Skye Goode, well-known for her trapping skills, sets her traps on sign from track identification.



Water animals such as mink, muskrat and ducks/geese are easy to identify when near water as well, due to the low number of species that will be in the water and on the muddy banks. Due to process of elimination, you can decipher what species would be down in the water and which would not.

Small game tracks can be difficult for some people to identify due to there often being so many tracks overlapping each other. Squirrels tend to have a “square” appearance between

all four paws and their tracks will always lead to a tree. Rabbits tend to have the back two feet in line with each other and the front two feet will be side by side, and in snow, they rarely leave their trails. Mice, weasels and other small rodents will leave little tiny dots in the snow - making out any paws or toes is nearly impossible.



## MORE TO LEARN

The conditions of the terrain you are looking in can make identifying tracks very difficult. “Snowman” snow is the best type of snow you can see clear tracks in, but “sugary” snow makes it almost impossible. Mud is a great terrain to see all sorts of important details, yet sand hides all those clear features.

Once you have practiced tracking enough to identify all species, you can eventually get in the habit of identifying male from female in some species. For turkeys, a tom will have much bigger feet, sink in deeper at the toes due to its weight being forward, and in the spring, will show strut marks from their wings and the tracks might even go in circles. Pay special attention to tracks showing clear segmentation

between the toe joints, as it takes a heavy bird to push a foot that deeply into the soil. This could be an especially mature tom. You may even be able to see beard dragging and spurs marks. However, hens are much smaller, their weight is distributed evenly and they walk in a straight line most of the time. You can also use tracks to determine flock size, as well as if hens, toms or both were in the flock.

Pheasant tracks will be similar to turkeys, but smaller, with males also possibly leaving spur marks. Sometimes, you will find wing/feather markings and can determine if the bird was taking flight or landing.



With whitetail, a doe tends to have more weight in the hips and a buck has more weight at the shoulders, much like humans, so the weight distribution will show in the track along with the size and gait.





A hunter looking  
at pheasant tracks  
alongside a road.



## Find on Facebook >> Animals Don't Cover Their Tracks: Animal Track Identification Help Group

When taking photos of tracks to possibly ask an expert or post online about identifying a track, there are two very important things to remember: include a size reference and show the entire gait. An extreme close-up of a single track with nothing in the photo for size can make it very difficult to identify since coyote, fox and wolf tracks are nearly identical except for size. Include a tape measure, pocketknife, water bottle, money, car keys or your hand/boot in the photo to show the size. The gait of the animal is important too because it shows where the back feet land in line with the front feet, the length of the stride, and if the animal is running, walking, loping or waddling.

Identifying tracks is a skill that will be of use to any outdoorsman in so many ways. Before trail cameras, tracking was the only way to tell if an animal had been in the area. As a kid, we used to measure bear tracks around bear baits to tell if there were ones mature enough to be harvested. Today, we identify them by trail cam pictures, which makes the fine skill of tracking more of a lost tool. However, each track tells a story and freezes a moment in time when an animal was just being itself in the wild, and we can read these little moments each time we go outside.

~ Skye Goode of Wisconsin



## THERE'S AN APP FOR THAT

Need help identifying tracks in the field? Check out the iTrack Wildlife app for your smartphone. You can download a free version, iTrack Wildlife Lite with very limited information to first test it out, then upgrade to more helpful versions such as iTrack Wildlife Basic for \$4.99 or iTrack Wildlife Pro for \$14.99. These are available for iOS as well as Android. There's even an iTrack Africa version for if you are traveling to Africa for a safari or hunt!



REGISTER  
ONLINE  
TODAY!



# Ladies

HUNTING CAMP

THE 6TH  
ANNUAL

- 1 Utah: June 21st - 23rd**  
R & K Hunting Co. - Henefer, Utah
- 2 Oregon: July 19th - 21st**  
Dry Creek Ranch - Fort Rock, Oregon
- 3 Oregon: July 26th - 28th**  
Dry Creek Ranch - Fort Rock, Oregon



Contact: [Candy@ladieshunting.com](mailto:Candy@ladieshunting.com) • 541.41



# Lady Hunters,

You're invited to come join the fun! We have some of the top instructors on hand to help sharpen your skills. Shooting, archery, orienteering, tracking, and everything in between. Try out & WIN some of the latest gear from our sponsors. We will even throw in delicious home-made meals and a fashion show featuring the latest women's outdoor clothing.



**Hope to see you!**

*Candy You*

**WWW.LADIESHUNTING.COM**



**0.3193 • PO Box 1619, La Pine, OR 97739**



HUNTRESS VIEW  
HIGHLIGHT

# Spring TURKEY TIPS

BEFORE, DURING  
& AFTER THE HUNT

**By Sarah Honadel**

*Photos from ADVENTURESS  
of the YEAR 2018 Contest*

Meagan Duffee Yates



Author Sarah Honadel  
of Huntress View >>

**E**ven though many of us are still experiencing winter, Punxsutawney Phil predicted an early spring and I know I'm definitely looking forward to it. Spring means longer days, warming temperatures and my favorite... turkey season! The most exciting time of the year! Hunters across the country are getting prepped to get back out into the woods after a couple months of down time, decked out in camo and ready to bag a big ol' tom.

The thing about turkey hunting though, is that turkeys can be jerks. They have incredible vision. They are constantly paranoid. Hunting them is both fun and extremely frustrating. It can be going well, then immediately turn bad. But with all of that, it's still my favorite hunting season.

The following are tips for spring turkey season that can help you bring home a gobbler, then enjoy him after the hunt!

### **PRE-SEASON: SCOUTING**

Scouting starts way before actual season starts. You have to find turkeys before you can harvest one. Whether you're hunting public land or private, get out and pound the ground looking for sign. Scout food sources such as cut grain fields or areas with a







Ruth Ireland

lot of mast-bearing trees for tracks, droppings or scratching signs.

Once you find sign, put out trail cameras to help gather more information such as what direction they are coming from and going to, what time of day they are visiting the area, how many turkeys are in the flock and whether you've got hens or toms.

## LEARN TO CALL

There are several different types of turkey calls, and everyone has a favorite. Try a few different types of calls and see what you're comfortable with, then

practice, practice,  
practice to learn  
not only the  
basics  
of the  
call,

<< Slate call.

**Find on Facebook >> The National Wild Turkey Federation ~ Also search to find local chapters, state NWTf pages and state women's NWTf pages!**

but also how to make different sounds.

**PUSH-BUTTON CALLS:** These are the easiest calls to learn for a beginner hunter, since they require little effort or skill. A major disadvantage: moisture can make them useless.

**BOX CALLS:** These are also fairly easy to use and can make a wider variety of sounds than push-button calls. They are especially great for long distance calling. However, since they are usually made of wood, moisture can be a problem. Additionally, these calls require two hands, which can be problematic while hunting.



**SLATE OR POT CALLS:** Probably the most popular type of turkey call, these calls can be made from a variety of materials such as slate, ceramic or glass, and are paired with a striker usually made of wood or carbon. A huge advantage is these calls can make pretty much any turkey sound if you practice. Depending on the materials, moisture may or may not affect it; however, they require two hands.

**DIAPHRAGM/MOUTH CALLS:** The most difficult to learn, but the most convenient of calls while hunting, since they are hands free. They are weatherproof, but can require some maintenance since the reeds can stick together and impact the ability to call. There are different calls for different sounds—so there are a lot of choices.

## UPCOMING WOMEN NWTF EVENTS

Family Turkey Hunting Workshop  
3/23/19  
US Army Corps - Burnsville, WV

Women's Shotgun Selection Clinic  
3/26/19 - Cabela's - Omaha, NE  
4/5/19 - Scheels - Lincoln, NE

Women. Only. Weekend.  
5/17/19  
Flatwood Outfitters - Hubert, NC

~ Click to view more events ~



Kelly Cohen





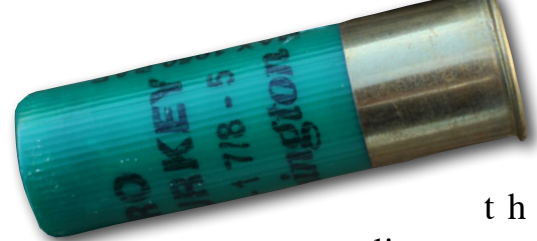
Kari Hirschberger

## PRACTICE SHOOTING

Whether you plan to hunt with a gun or bow, you need to prep prior to opening day. Turkeys have a small kill zone, so you have to make sure your shot is good, or you'll likely lose a bird.

**SHOTGUN:** First, shoot several different brands of shells to see which one has the best pattern for your gun. There's no magic number of pellets for a kill, but you'll definitely want your pattern centered around the head/neck area and want multiple pellets to penetrate.

Next, determine how your gun patterns at different distances and with different chokes. I missed a turkey at 20 yards because I didn't check my gun at this distance with the turkey choke. I figured out afterward that at



at this distance, the pattern was only about the size of a golf ball.

**BOW:** Research different broadheads and determine what to use during season: guillotine, expandable or fixed blade. It comes down to personal preference, how they shoot in your bow and where you plan to aim. Study up on the best shot placement—body shot or base of the neck, depending on broadheads - and different angles.

If one is available, practice shooting a foam turkey target to get the right placement and size. If all you've got is a normal block-style or deer target, get a life-size paper turkey and attach it to your normal target so you can get a better idea of placement.

And don't forget to practice in your camo and from your ground blind, if that's how you'll be hunting.



Rachelle Hedrick





**VIDEO: Shoot Like A Girl / 'Pattern a Shotgun'** - Click to watch Cristy Crawford and Karen Butler from Shoot Like A Girl demonstrate patterning a shotgun!

## DURING: FIND THE ROOST

Find out where the turkeys are roosting, and you'll be in a better position to harvest a turkey. Head to the woods in the mid-to-late afternoon and wait for the birds to go to roost—if you're close enough, you'll be able to hear their wings beat as they fly up. You can do this in the pre-season too, but turkeys will likely move and won't always roost in the same spot.

If you know where they're roosting, get in before daylight and get set up to wait for them to fly down. Be careful not to get too close though. You'll want to give them enough room to fly down, move around and get comfortable.

## CAMOUFLAGE YOURSELF

Turkeys have excellent vision, so concealment is key in turkey hunting. Depending on where you're hunting—

northern states, southern states, east coast or west—the terrain will be different. Northern and western areas may still have snow on the ground, and the trees and ground cover may not have budded out yet. While southern areas may be in complete 'green up' mode. Either way, find camo that works with your environment to provide a good concealment. If you're hunting from a ground or box blind, wear black since the inside of the blind will appear black.

Remember to cover your hands and face too. I prefer thinner layering-type gloves so they aren't bulky when calling or shooting. For face concealment, some people prefer face paint, while others prefer a mask. Personally, I like a combo. I don't like walking with a mask on because I find it hard to breathe. So, I put on face paint, then use either a full mask or neck gaiter and hat when sitting.





In addition to what you wear, make sure when you get settled into your spot, you're out of the sunlight. Set up in a shady spot with the sun at your back—that way the turkeys are looking into the sun if they're looking in your direction.

## IGNORE THE RAIN

Spring usually means rain for a lot of areas. Fortunately, turkeys don't mind the rain. It may make them sleep in, but they'll come down eventually. Prepare to hunt from a ground blind, or make sure you have good rain gear. And consider the impact of rain on your calling too, as previously mentioned.

During rain, turkeys won't be able to

hear as well, so they will typically move to open fields where they can depend on their eyesight. Have your ground blind set up on the field edge and be ready for them to come in. I've harvested more turkeys in the rain, than not. The worst part, it does a number on their feathers so salvaging them for mounts can be difficult.

As for gobbling, I've found that sometimes they gobble more during rain, and sometimes they won't make a peep. Some turkeys will gobble at every noise; so if there's thunder, prepare to hear some gobbles with each clap. And if the rain passes and the sun comes out, some turkeys will make up for lost time and gobble nonstop!



## DECOY SETUP

Just like with calls, there are a lot of options when it comes to decoys, such as full-body foam, collapsible or plastic decoys; standing hens or breeding hen decoy positions; plus a variety of aggressive and submissive jake or tom decoys. While there's no guaranteed decoy or setup, the key is finding something that looks real in order to close the distance and get a wary tom to come in.

Decoys aren't an absolute necessity, but they can definitely increase your odds of

harvesting a bird. During early season, hen and jake decoys can make a big tom jealous enough to come within range. Later in the season though, using only a single hen decoy will usually do the trick, as gobblers are tired of fighting for a mate.

## DURING EARLY SEASON, HEN AND JAKE DECOYS CAN MAKE A BIG TOM JEALOUS ...

## AFTER: FIELD DRESSING

Hopefully you're successful with your turkey hunt and have a gobbler to bring home! Field dressing a turkey is fairly simple, and doesn't require plucking all of the feathers, depending on how you plan to cook it later. You might want to save it as a whole turkey, or you can piece out the breast meat, legs and thighs. There are several tutorials online to guide you on how to butcher, if needed.



Hunting from *her* point of view.



[facebook.com/HuntressView](https://facebook.com/HuntressView)



[twitter.com/HuntressView](https://twitter.com/HuntressView)



[instagram.com/HuntressView](https://instagram.com/HuntressView)



[pinterest.com/HuntressView](https://pinterest.com/HuntressView)





Audrey Pfaffe



Tara Hokuf

## SAVING YOUR TROPHY

If you plan to have your turkey mounted, you'll need to take special precautions to minimize feather damage. Contact your favorite taxidermist prior to season to find out how it should be prepped and stored prior to bringing it in. If you only want to mount the fan, that's an easy at-home DIY project! And remember to cut the beard off at the skin and salt the base.

## TIME TO EAT

And the best part... eating it! My favorite way to eat wild turkey is to cut into nuggets, roll in Italian breadcrumbs and then fry. But there are a lot of options—turkey tacos, smoked turkey breast, pot pie, turkey noodle soup, quesadillas... the options are endless!

~ Sarah Honadel of Idaho - Huntress View



Stephanie Prater





**VIDEO: Ashley Rae / 'This GIANT Walleye Brought Me To Tears!!!'** - You've got to check out Ashley Rae's unbelievable 35-inch walleye of a lifetime! Congratulations, Ashley! **SheLovesToFish.com**

# AdventureMagazine.com

## Stack the Racks -Karla Miller

At first it seemed like there was no strategy or plan to finding sheds. It felt like we were aimlessly wandering through the bushes to find some bones. Now that I've got a shed hunting trip or two under my belt and my own growing collection of antlers, I have learned there are some important ...

## Eyes in the Skies -Andrea Crider

Late winter is often seen as "down time" and the end of most hunting seasons; however, there's one bird often overlooked that you should add to your lineup – crows. While crows are listed as a nongame bird since they are hunted as a nuisance animal instead of for consumption, don't ...

## Marvel of Morels -Jennifer Pudenz

They're famous for being a true delicacy. And if there's anything to make them even more irresistible, it's the fact we only have them to savor once a year. However, many don't realize there are true morels and false morels. It is important to know the differences as false morels are ...



TAILORED  
FOR THE  
OUTDOOR  
WOMAN

CLICK TO VIEW  
PAST ISSUES

