



IOWA OUTDOORS

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

CONSERVATION AND RECREATION DIVISION | WWW.IOWADNR.GOV/NEWS/

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: OCTOBER 20, 2009

1. Rathbun Hatchery Walleyes Stocked Across Iowa – by Lowell Washburn [electronic photos available upon request]
2. Ceremony for Newest State Preserve Set for Oct. 22
3. Deer Hunt Brings Kids Back Outdoors
4. College Classroom Goes Outside
5. Des Moines Meeting Set for Proposed Regulations When Issuing Free Fishing and Hunting Licenses
6. Outdoors Calendar

RATHBUN HATCHERY WALLEYES STOCKED ACROSS IOWA

By Lowell Washburn

Iowa Department of Natural Resources

Iowa's long range fishing forecast showed a marked improvement last week as more than 150,000, nine-inch, advanced fall fingerling walleyes were stocked into nearly a dozen popular public fisheries. Reared at southern Iowa's Rathbun State Fish Hatchery, the fingerlings began life on natural foods but were then trained to feed on a specially developed dry ration. The protein rich mixture promotes rapid growth and produces advanced fingerlings that are regarded as "super fish" by anglers who one day hope to put them in the boat and on the table.

"The survival of the fingerlings we stock at this size is almost beyond excellent. Fish like these don't happen by accident but are the direct result of more than two decades of advanced fisheries research and technology," says DNR Fisheries Technician, Randy Esser.

Until recently, first year walleye growth exceeding six inches was considered out of the norm and nine-inch fingerlings were simply unheard of. In addition to already achieving the nine-inch growth mark, this year's crop of "Rathbun Jumbos" currently weigh in at more than a quarter of a pound each --- simply incredible for walleyes less than six months of age, says Esser.

Cerro Gordo County's Clear Lake was the destination for more than 18,000 of the Rathbun jumbos. According to north Iowa District Fisheries Biologist, Scott Grummer, the Rathbun walleyes represent the season's final installment of young game fish to Clear Lake and will supplement earlier 2009 walleye stockings which included 16 million fry, 55,000 three-inch fingerlings, and 18,000 six-inch advanced fingerlings.

"Recent young of the year fish surveys have revealed that the natural reproduction of [food base] forage fish was phenomenal at Clear Lake this year," says Grummer. "The lake definitely has food and the survival and growth rates of these advanced fingerlings should be incredible. Under excellent conditions, walleyes can attain the legal 14-inch minimum length limit within four growing seasons. I think these fish will make it in three."

Other Iowa lakes to receive Rathbun fingerlings this fall include Black Hawk Lake, Lake Icaria, Storm Lake, West Okoboji, Big Creek, Lake Manawa, and Lake Sugema. Although original requests called for 200,000 advanced fingerlings, stockings were cut by more than 40,000 walleyes due to budget cuts, said Esser.

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Media Contact: Daryl Howell, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, at 515-281-8524.

CEREMONY FOR NEWEST STATE PRESERVE SET FOR OCT. 22

GLENWOOD, Iowa – The Glenwood Archaeological State Preserve will be recognized during a ceremony at 1 p.m., Oct. 22, in the Glenwood Resource Center Visitor Center in the 2nd Floor Conference Room, in Glenwood. This will be Iowa's 96th dedicated preserve.

The Glenwood Archaeological State Preserve has 109 recorded archaeological sites, ranging from 5,000 years in age, to as recent at 150 years ago. Most significant are the 27 earthlodge sites that are related to the Glenwood culture, also known as the Nebraska phase of the Central Plains tradition.

Earthlodges were square to rectangular structures with a dome-like roof and central hearth. A pit was excavated to form the earthen floor. Timber framing supported a wattle and daub covering. Often, the entryway was sloping and formed a hall-like appendage to the house. Depending on its size, a lodge could house a few individuals to 40 or more people.

These earthlodge sites provide a glimpse into the lives of ancestral Plains Indians just prior to European contact. Only a small fraction of the preserve has been archaeologically surveyed, so many more sites likely exist.

There are 275 known Glenwood culture sites in Iowa and 10 percent of those are in the 906-acre Glenwood Archaeological State Preserve.

Other archeological preserves include Mines of Spain, near Dubuque, Fort Atkinson, in southwest Winneshiek County, and Wittcock Indian Village, in southeast O'Brien County.

Guest speakers at the dedication include State Senator Hubert Houser, Cindy Peterson, chair of the State Preserves Advisory Board, State Representative Greg Forristall, State Senator Dick Dearden, State Senator Mike Gronstal, Richard Leopold, director of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Sally Titus, deputy director for field operations with the Department of Human Services, and Ron Kohn, Mills County Board of Supervisors.

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DEER HUNT BRINGS KIDS BACK OUTDOORS

Many Iowans are finding themselves drifting away from traditional outdoor pursuits, including hunting, because of an increase in the time demands ranging from children's activities to demands from work.

When there is competition between activities that which is easiest and less time consuming usually wins out. For those who love the outdoors, that does not bode well for the future.

But there is hope. Parents are increasingly recognizing this shift away from the outdoors. There is an effort by conservation groups to bring kids back to the outdoors. Groups like Pheasants Forever, Ducks Unlimited, Whitetails Unlimited, Izaak Walton League as well as the DNR and county conservation boards and others are working through these mentored hunts to bring the kids back to the woods and fields.

In Appanoose County, Randy McPherren is leading the charge.

McPherren, the Iowa DNR's conservation officer for Appanoose and Monroe counties for the past 25 years, gets asked to take kids hunting from all directions – at school events, filling up with gas and even from passers by. As the local game warden, McPherren is on the frontline of the nature deficit battle. And he has decided to do something about it.

Last August, McPherren decided he wanted to put together a hunt of a lifetime for kids in Appanoose County, who otherwise would not have the chance. Appanoose County has some of the best deer hunting in a state that is the tops in whitetail hunting world. It was his hope was that the hunt would create in them a lifetime passion for the outdoors. McPherren began contacting local landowners and deer hunting guides to make the hunt happen and partnered with Laura DeCook with the Appanoose County Conservation Board to host the event.

“Our goal was to provide a hunting trip of a lifetime for these youths,” McPherren said. “We were looking for kids who do not have the opportunity to get outdoors. Many are from single parent homes and their parents simply do not have the time. The parents were supportive and excited for their kid's experience.”

The mentored hunt was advertised in the local newspaper, in all the schools in Appanoose County and by word of mouth. Eight kids between ages 9 and 14 responded and,

after a day of field training on deer management, firearm safety, shooting fundamentals, trigger control, shot placement and some live firing, the kids were ready.

Youth hunters and volunteers gathered at the Appanoose County Conservation Board office in Sharon Bluffs State Park at 2 p.m., Oct. 3. After instructions, the kids were partnered with guides then spread throughout the county. They were in their deer stands by 4 p.m. By 7:15 p.m., when the hunt ended for the day, five youth had taken a deer. Each deer was taken by one shot.

“The kids made exceptional shot placement,” said McPherren. “We spent a lot of time during the field day on dry firing and trigger control and discussing proper shot placement and the kids did it in the field just like they were taught.”

The evening ended with a campfire roast with hotdogs and s'mores. Volunteers and some parents witnessed the kids reliving the exciting experience with each other. “For some, it was their first experience hunting anything and they were practically doing back flips,” McPherren said.

On Oct. 4, the three kids who had not taken a deer were back in their stands around 4 p.m., preparing for the evening hunt. One deer was taken Sunday and the two youth who did not fill their tags will be partnered with guides during the early muzzleloader deer season, which began Oct. 17.

“One of our goals is to make this an annual event,” McPherren said. “There is a disconnection between our youth and our natural resources and it is growing.

“Our guides had more excitement in the success of our hunt, than if it was one of their own,” McPherren said. “The kids wear their emotions on their sleeve, and it is contagious. I can’t say enough thanks to the guides, landowners and other volunteers that we had. It was their commitment and hard work that made this a successful event”

The Appanoose County Mentored Deer Hunt was hosted by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Appanoose County Conservation Board, Southern Iowa Whitetails, Steve Shoop, owner of J and S Trophy Hunts, Moravia; Mike Mattly and Sam Belloma of Knight Rifles, Centerville; Knight and Hale game calls; Larry Kendall, owner, of Muddy Outdoors, Albia; Soap Creek Outfitters; Kramer Sausage Company; LaPorte City, Iowa Rotocast Plastics, Decorah, and Allen Currin.

Media Contact: Randy McPherren, Conservation Officer for Appanoose and Monroe counties, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 641-777-2164.

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COLLEGE CLASSROOM GOES OUTSIDE

When your field of study is the outdoors, going to class doesn’t always mean filing into the classroom. Moments after piling out of their school van, 16 Kirkwood College students

were face to fin with over 20 fish. They'd been learning about Iowa fish species in aquatic wildlife class; how to identify them, what they ate, what habitat they prefer. This stop at the Lake Macbride fisheries station was their quiz.

DNR fisheries biologist Paul Sleeper displayed each live fish; taking questions from the students. Each wrote down his or her choice on a clipboard worksheet. With quizzes collected, Sleeper pulled each fish back out of its aerated tank; naming it and noting identifying characteristics. "Dark gray; the mouth goes straight forward; no teeth on this one. It's mainly a filter feeder," noted Sleeper, as gripped a slippery buffalo. "All the suckers and carp mouths will point down. They feed off the bottom."

The class is one required in Kirkwood's Parks and Natural Resources program. "I need to do some studying. The carp family's pretty hard for me," laughed Renee Regenitter. "I learned it's a lot easier to see them on slides than in person." Still, the day at the lake reinforced her choice for a future job. "I want to be outside, dealing with the fish for a career; maybe as a naturalist."

For Robert Weaver, the up-close review was a great idea. "I go fishing a lot, so most of them I knew. I got a couple mixed up; thought the white bass was a wiper," admitted Weaver. This...gets people interested. On a (classroom) slide, the colors might be a lot different than up close. The atmosphere is neat."

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DES MOINES MEETING SET FOR PROPOSED REGULATIONS WHEN ISSUING FREE FISHING AND HUNTING LICENSES

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources will host a public meeting to receive comments on proposed changes on how it issues free fishing and/or hunting licenses to people who are eligible according to a disability and/or age or low income status.

The proposed changes clarify severe mental disability and severe physical disability; establishes a means to verify low income persons; substitutes a free lifetime fishing license with a free annual fishing license; clarifies procedure when issuing a free fishing or hunting license; permits enforcement capability in revoking licenses issued in violation of this rule; and provides a mechanism through which the department may deny, suspend or revoke licenses of persons who owe the State of Iowa money pursuant to Iowa Code chapter 272D.

The public meeting will begin at 1 p.m., October 27, in the Wallace State Office Building, Conference Room 4E, 502 E. 9th Street, in Des Moines. Any persons who attend the public hearing and have special needs, such as hearing or mobility impairments should contact the Department of Natural Resources and advise of specific needs.

The DNR will be accepting written comments through October 27. Comments are to be sent to Martin Konrad, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 502 E. 9th St., Des Moines, IA

50319-0034 or to Martin.Konrad@dnr.iowa.gov; oral comments may be made by calling 515-281-6976 or 515-281-6976 or expressed in person at the fisheries bureau office on the fourth floor of the Wallace Building.

Contacts: Martin Konrad 515/281-6976 or Dave Cretors 515/281-0413

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OUTDOORS CALENDAR – Hunting Seasons Open

Ducks, Mergansers, Coots north zone Oct. 10 – Dec. 3

Ducks, Mergansers, Coots south zone Oct. 17 – Dec. 10

Canada Geese and Brant north zone Oct. 10 – Dec. 13 and Dec. 19 – Jan. 3, 2010

Canada Geese and Brant south zone Oct. 17 – Dec. 13 and Dec. 19 – Jan. 10, 2010

White-fronted Geese Sept. 26 – Dec. 6

Light Geese Sept. 26 – Jan. 10, 2010

Woodcock Oct. 3 – Nov. 16

Snipe Sept. 5 – Nov. 30

Rails Sept. 5 – Nov. 13

Early Muzzleloader Deer Oct. 17 – 25

Fall Turkey Archery Only Oct. 1 – Dec. 4 and Dec. 21 - Jan. 10, 2010

Fall Turkey Gun/Bow Oct. 12 – Dec. 4

Hunting Seasons Opening Soon

Youth Pheasant Oct. 24 – 25

Regular Pheasant Oct. 31 – Jan. 10, 2010

Bobwhite Quail Oct. 31 – Jan. 31, 2010

Camping

Off-season camping rates are in effect for state parks in Iowa. Contact the specific park to see if water service is still available. Iowa state park campgrounds do not close for the winter.

Iowa DNR 24/7

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