



P.O. Box 145 • New Richmond, WI 54017 • (715) 246-4884 • www.willowriver.org

Willow River Rod & Gun Club News

A new trap thrower has been purchased by the club and will soon be in operation.

The Summer Archery League is now in full swing with 41 teams competing. Five of these teams are youth teams. There are 5-8 members on each team. The deadline to turn in weekly scores has been extended to noon on Sundays to accommodate the increase in shooters.

The Summer Trap League has 13 teams shooting with 2 youth teams.

The ARA and IR50 rim fire teams have participated in several shoots already this year.

All the ranges have been mowed and maintenance work is needed on the berms and hangers. A workday will be scheduled soon.

The entrance road to our land will receive 2-4 inches of new gravel deposited from the gate to the club house with grading performed. Our small towed grader is working out extremely well.

Club memberships are coming in at a good pace as the leagues become active.

The Park Art Fair and Fun Fest fundraisers are in the planning stages with everything falling into place.

A new group is forming called "Friends of the St Croix Wetlands Management District". Many projects will be scheduled on the Waterfowl Production Areas (WPA) in our area and also on adjacent private lands. The group will be an active one accomplishing much according to the current plans.

A Hunters Education teachers training session may be held on the club land this summer.

We need some light poles to use on the land. Metal towers are also a possibility. If anyone has access to them please contact one of the Board.

The old out house will be filled in and converted into a storage building. A card reader is planned to be added to the clubhouse to allow indoor restroom access to club members.

The club land will be closed for private use on June 5th (Saturday) from 3-8 pm and on June 26th (Saturday) from 1-8 pm.

Money was allotted for expenses on the trap ranges. Anyone that wishes to contribute anything for inclusion into the club newsletter is asked to call Mike at 246-6643

or send via email at mikesal@frontiernet.net

Star Prairie Fish & Game Association Activities

The Annual Senior Pontoon outing is scheduled for Wednesday, June 16th with a rain date of June 23rd. The River Island Park shelter has been reserved. Three vans for transporting guests are needed.

One or more of the fish cribs placed on Cedar Lake have been discovered in shallow water. The DNR will be contacted to move them to a safe location. Legal size brown trout have been planted on the Willow River. The oak savannah prairie at McMurtrie preserve has been burned.

A letter will be sent to past Park Party sponsors explaining the decision to discontinue the event and asking for continued support of our other fundraisers.

A raffle license has been applied for with the goal is to have guns and raffle tickets at the local establishments in July. A live auction of an original artwork is a possibility for the 2010 Bucks Night.

Porta Potties have been purchased from Powers Sanitation and will be permanently located near the parking lot at the McMurtrie Preserve. The Boy Scouts Order of the Arrow will camp out at McMurtrie on May 15th and 16th. A potential Eagle Scout project designed to improve the boardwalk and add a lake side dock on

Cedar Lake Lane will be considered by Anders Faaren. The conservation bus tour of SPLPT and USF&W properties will be held on July 17th.

The club has 28 paid members and 15 life members (age 65 and older).

A bluebird nest box trail of 14 boxes was erected on WPA's and the Boche property, east of Star Prairie on Monday, March 29th. The SPLPT is looking for a group to monitor the usage of the boxes.

The SPF&GA has been reimbursed per our arrangement for project funding with USF&W.

The SPF&GA has received an Outstanding Conservation Club of the year award from the Wisconsin Conservation Congress. Chuck Magoon will accept the award on behalf of the club.

The Trout Fest will again be held on Memorial Day at the Star Prairie Trout farm. All club members are invited

to attend.

The Bob Moberg scholarship will stay at New Richmond for this year. The Outreach committee will make a recommendation to the club for next year.

The road side cleanup of Hwy 65 into Star Prairie was completed on Thursday, April 15th with about 20 members participating.

The Richardson's Sports club is holding a Handicapped Fishing day on June 5th on Lake Magnor. Rich Miller is the club contact for this event.

The Kids fishing day sponsored by the Indianhead Bass club, is scheduled for June 5th. Contact Erv Erickson if you know of a youth ages 8 –to 12 who would be interested in participating.



Ron Roettger with 2010 turkey



Mallard Nesting Structure

St. Croix Prairie WPA and Nest Structures

by Tom Kerr –USF&WS

If you have driven by the St. Croix Prairie Waterfowl Production Area (WPA) about two miles west of New Richmond, you probably saw a new hay filled cylinder in the wetland by the road. This cylinder is a mallard nesting structure. Mallards are very adaptable birds and are commonly seen on the many WPAs in the St. Croix Wetland Management District. One of the most important factors limiting waterfowl production is nest predation. As humans developed this part of Western Wisconsin, replacing open prairie, oak savanna and wetlands with houses, cities, farm fields, trees, pastures, roads etc. the predator community changed to include adaptable animals such as skunks, opossums, raccoons, red fox, red tailed hawks and great horned owls. When grassland nesting cover is limited, these predators can be very efficient at finding waterfowl nests. We really can't change what has happened with the animal community in our area but we can try to improve nest success by managing for large tracts of grassland adjacent to wetlands or in some areas, placing nest structures to benefit waterfowl.

A study in this area in the 1990s found that mallards using nest baskets hatched approximately 80% of the time while nest success in grassland fields can vary from 15-20%. Nest structures can be placed in small wetlands from a half acre to 3-4 acres in size. They should be about 3 feet over the normal water level. Although they may not be used the first year, keep checking them

and cleaning them out or replacing the hay as needed. Once they are used by a mallard hen, your chances of use in future year's increases. Although nest structures will not replace the value of large tracts of grassland for nesting birds, they can be a good tool to increase the odds of seeing a mallard brood on your wetland.

If you would like to build your own mallard nest structure and place it in your wetland, see the Delta Waterfowl website for instructions and information. <http://www.deltawaterfowl.org/henhouses/build.php>

Erickson WPA and Mudflats

Although it seems that we have had several cold rainy days lately, the effects of the prolonged drought are evident on the Erickson Waterfowl Production Area (WPA). Many of the wetlands on the 466 acre WPA, which is located just northeast of New Richmond at Highway 64 and 145th Street, are rapidly drying up, exposing large mudflats. Although many species of waterfowl like blue winged teal and mallards will just continue north until they find suitable breeding habitat, some birds seek out mudflats during their migration. Shorebirds like open mudflats and the associated shallow water, which are preferred feeding areas as they search for aquatic invertebrates. Like other spring migrants, they rely on areas where they can easily find food and fuel up quickly for the long energy consuming flight north.

One species that you may see at Erickson WPA is the Greater Yellowlegs. Greater Yellowlegs are a medium sized shorebird with long bright yellow legs. They winter in South America and migrate north to the boreal regions of Canada and Alaska where they nest near bogs and marshes. They incubate their eggs for 23 days and the young fledge 18 to 20 days later. Soon after, they begin their migration south as the arctic summer winds down.

As a group, shorebirds take some of the most incredible migration journeys of any North American birds, some traveling 15,000 miles in this annual trip from the wintering grounds in South America to their breeding grounds in the Arctic and then back south again. Although they may only spend a few days or even a few hours on local wetlands like those found on the Erickson WPA, these wetlands are crucial links on their long journey.



Fox kits out and about Spring 2010



Hunter Education Range Day 2010

To find the Erickson WPA or for more information on the St. Croix Wetland Management District, check out our website at www.fws.gov/midwest/stcroix/.

Boating - by Warden Paul Sickman

The boating season is in full swing. Boating on lakes and rivers in Wisconsin has become a very popular past time. Each year thousands of boaters venture out to Wisconsin waters to enjoy the sport. With the increase in use it is very important that you, as a boat operator understand the laws of boating. Awareness of these laws could steer you and other boaters from a "close call". Please consult the Wisconsin Boating Regulations before boating this season. Here are few boating reminders for the upcoming summer season:

All personal watercrafts (PWC) must operate at a slow no wake speed within 200 feet of any shore on a lake.

All PWCs must operate at slow no wake speeds anytime the PWC is within 100 feet of any other boat or a PWC on any water body.

Operators and all passengers on PWCs must wear their life jackets at all times.

All boats must operate at slow no wake speed anytime they are within 100 feet of a dock, raft, pier, buoy restricted area or SHORE.

While towing a water-skier, tuber, etc., the boat must have a competent observer to watch the skier (a mirror is not legal in Wisconsin).

All PWC's pulling a water-skier must be capable of carrying 3 individuals.

All boats must have a wearable life jacket of the proper size and type for each individual on board the boat.

All boats 16 feet and over must have a throwable floatation device (seat cushion or ring buoy).

All boats equipped with motors must be registered, even electric trolling motors.

Boats on the right have the right of way on the water.

Enjoy the water, don't drink and drive.

New Boating Law

A new boating rule in Wisconsin is designed to make lakes safer while protecting shorelines and improving water quality. The law prohibits boaters from operating their boats at speeds greater than slow-no-wake within 100 feet of lake shorelines.

The law applies to all lakes, including the lake areas of flowages.

Moreover, boats operating in shallow waters often churn up sediment and chop up vegetation, decreasing water quality, and potentially spreading invasive aquatic species like Eurasian water-milfoil. Slowing these boats will reduce this problem. In addition, eliminating near shore wakes will reduce shoreline erosion.

This change is in addition to current law which already prohibits boaters on lakes from operating at speeds greater than slow-no-wake within 100 feet of docks, rafts, piers and buoyed restricted areas.

Personal watercraft (PWC) operators must also follow these laws in addition to speed restrictions that apply specifically to PWCs. PWC operators cannot operate at a speed greater than slow-no-wake within 200 feet of the shoreline of any lake. They also are required to cut back to slow-no-wake speed when passing within 100 feet of other boats, including other PWCs. This law applies to both rivers and lakes.

Slow-no-wake is defined as the minimum speed required to maintain steerage. Speed violations are the primary source of boating complaints in the summer. Speed is also a frequent cause of boat crashes, especially at night. People operating boats at night need to slow down to avoid colliding with people, boats or structures lawfully on the water. Running lights are required from sunset to sunrise. When on unfamiliar waters, boaters are responsible for knowing all the rules. This means checking at boat ramps for local ordinances that might further regulate boating on that body of water. For any questions call Warden Paul Sickman at 715-684-2914 X 120. Have a safe and fun boating season!!

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Upcoming Events...

- May 22nd (Saturday).....IR 50-50 Rim fire match 10am – 3pm
May 25th (Thursday).....Blue Thumb Raingarden Design Class, 6-8 pm, New Richmond Middle School,
Contact: Aleisha Miller 715-684-2874
May 29th (Saturday).....Musky season opens north of Highway 10
June 3rd – ThursdaySomerset PD range use 10 am – 5 pm
June 5th and 6thFree Fishing Weekend, no license or stamps required to fish inland waters or outlying
Wisconsin waters of the Great Lakes and Mississippi and St. Croix Rivers. All bag
and size limits and other regulations apply.
June 5th (Saturday).....4H shoot, 9 am to noon
June 5th (Saturday).....Club land closed from 2-8 pm for private party.
June 6th (Sunday).....State Parks Open House Day, free admission to all state parks, forests and trails.
June 6th (Sunday).....Willow River State Park OWLS, “Art Along the Willow”, Contact: Kari 715-386-9340
June 7th (Monday)ARA Rim fire match, 6 card, 5 – 9 pm
June 10th (Thursday)Willow River Rod & Gun Club’s June Meeting, 7 pm, club land, Contact: Brian Headlee at 246-5322
June 14th (Monday)ARA Rim fire match, 6 card, 5 – 9 pm
June 19th (Saturday).....Northern zone bass season goes from catch and release to daily bag limits, check current regulations
June 19th (Saturday).....4H shoot, 9 am to noon
June 21st (Monday).....Star Prairie Fish & Game Association June Meeting,
6:00 Dinner & Social, 7:00 Meeting, Don Madsen’s
June 26th (Saturday).....Club land closed from 2-8 pm for private party.
June 27th (Sunday).....IR 50-50 rim fire match, 10 am – 3 pm
June 27th (Sunday).....ARA 6 card, rim fire match, 3 – 7 pm
July 3rd (Saturday).....4H Club Shoot 9 am – 3 pm

Comments, criticisms or input, please contact Mike Reiter 246-6643 or Jessa Nelson 246-0266

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