

Northwestern Ontario

FREE

Outdoors



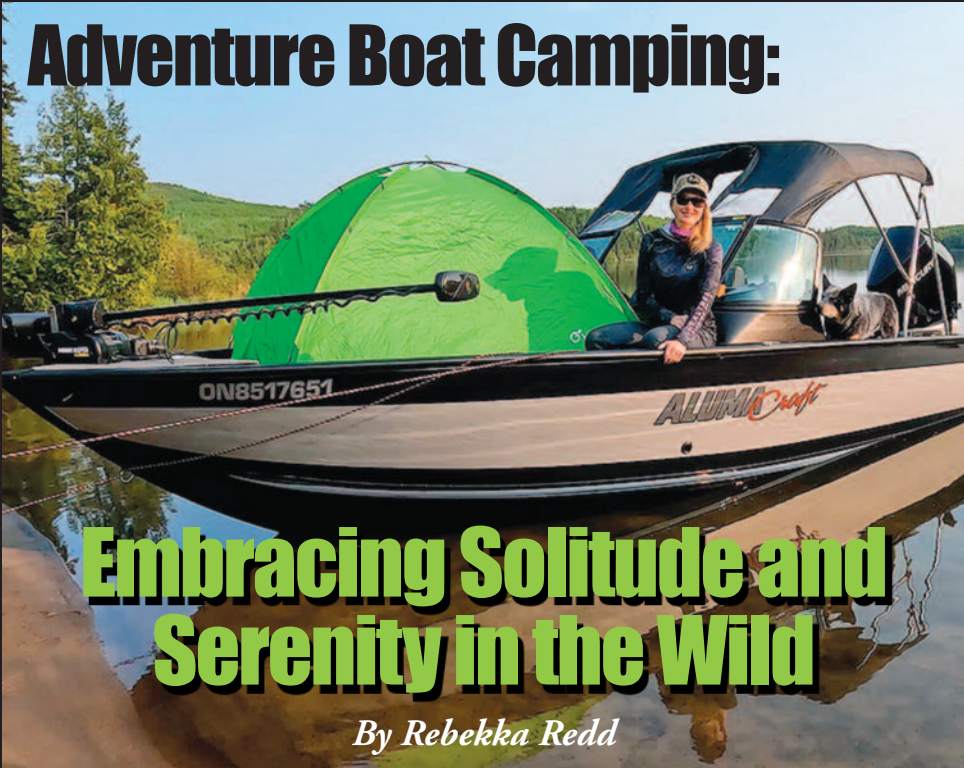
OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE NORTHWESTERN ONTARIO SPORTSMEN'S ALLIANCE



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Adventure Boat Camping:



Embracing Solitude and Serenity in the Wild

By Rebekka Redd

Venturing into the great outdoors has always been my passion. Whether it’s sleeping in hammocks amid the wilds of Africa or beneath the rainforests of South America, I’ve always sought to push the boundaries of my adventurous spirit. But it was during my fishing trips that I stumbled upon an idea that would forever change my camping experience – boat camping!

With each fishing expedition requiring a substantial effort to reach the perfect spot, turning back to the launch point felt like a missed opportunity. Instead, I decided to transform my boat into a floating haven, allowing me to camp wherever my heart desired.

As a true adventurer, I’ve explored numerous terrains and sought thrilling experiences. So, why not embrace the novelty of sleeping in a tent aboard my trusty boat?

It turned out to be an absolute delight! Determined to share this remarkable experience, I embarked on a journey to document my boat camping escapades, which have become an integral part of my life for years.

At the dawn of this new year, I found myself equipped with a state-of-the-art 22-foot Alumacraft boat, boasting a powerful 250 Mercury Verado engine. This vessel not only provided ample space for all my gear but also offered unrivaled comfort. My preparations were meticulous; I packed extra provisions of gas, water, and food to sustain me during my boat camping excursions and some.

Setting up camp is a breeze with my reliable two-person all-weather tent placed on the bow of the boat. To ensure a good night’s sleep, I indulge in an inflatable camping mattress paired with a snug summit cold weather sleeping bag. Safety is my top priority, so I carry headlamps, extra lights, flares, boaters safety kit, life jackets, oars, boat ropes, anchors and more. For additional peace of mind, I have a satellite phone and a GPS mapping system, allowing me to roam without losing my way. I religiously keep my loved ones informed about my precise location through GPS pings.

Cooking onboard is part of the joyous experience, and I’ve perfected my techniques with a portable stove, sometimes opting for a two-burner setup or a more compact one burner version, depending on what I feel like packing. My selection of favorite camping foods adds a touch of culinary delight to the trip. Of course, my loyal canine companion joins me, and I ensure he enjoys the journey as much as I do. Selecting fishing spots with nearby beaches allows him to frolic during our long days on the boat. To shield ourselves from the scorching sun, I put up the Bimini top, providing us both with ample shade.

Finding a tranquil bay or safe harbor is pivotal to a rewarding and secure experience – a practice adopted by seasoned sailboat enthusiasts. My luck led me to discover awe-inspiring spots. Securing the boat to a tree onshore and anchoring it off the stern provide stability and prevent any unwanted drifting. Sometimes, I anchor close to a picturesque beach, while at other times, I keep a bit of distance from the shore.

The enchanting moments that boat camping provides are just amazing. I often find myself in the company of moose foraging close to my resting spots, while playful otters dart around my boat as I cook up a delicious lunch. When night falls, the air comes alive with the soothing sounds of night birds, and on some occasions, I am blessed with pure silence, allowing me to immerse myself in the tranquil surroundings. However, I must admit that in some camping spot, I encountered an intense swarm of mosquitoes, prompting me to quickly zip up my tent for protection!

I cherish the serenity, independence, and boundless adventure that these solo trips bring. Liberated from the distractions of the modern world, I find solace and rejuvenation in the lap of nature.

With my family hailing from Finland, a culture that deeply reveres time spent in nature, I am no stranger to the rewards of escaping into the wilderness. The profound connection with the wild and the tranquility it bestows upon my soul is something I treasure immensely.

So, my fellow adventurers, may your spirits be high, your sense of exploration unwavering, and your boat camping experiences unforgettable! Embrace the thrill of independence and bask in the serenity of nature – for it is in these moments that life’s truest joys are discovered. Happy adventure camping! Tight Lines and Big Fish!



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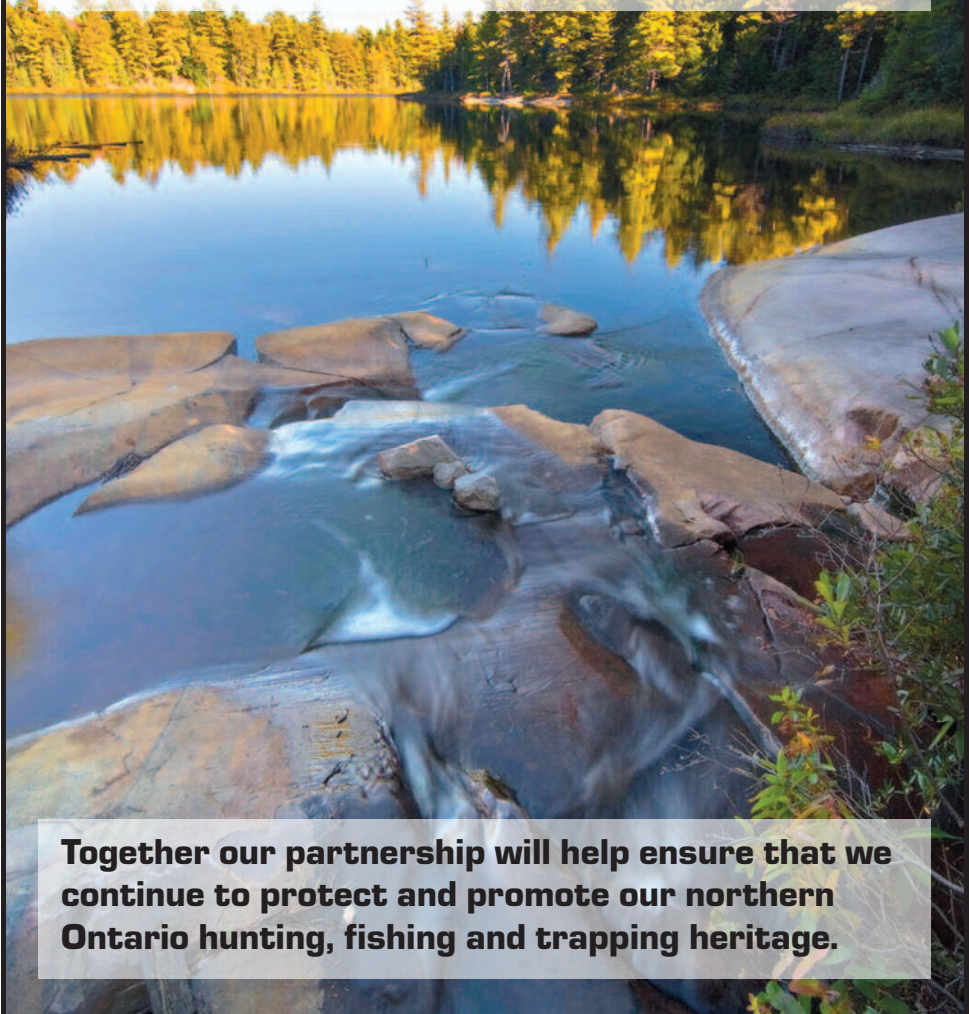
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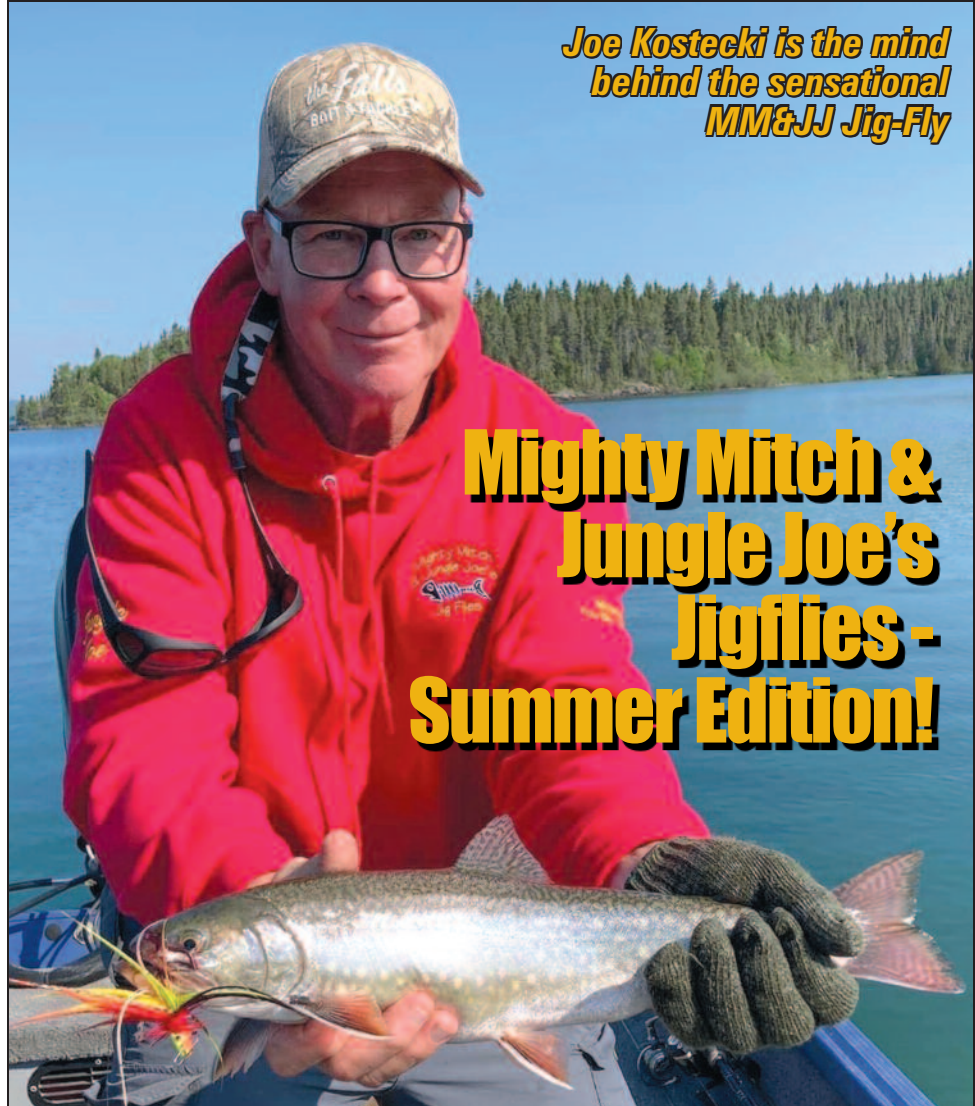
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**Joe Kostecki is the mind
behind the sensational
MM&JJ Jig-Fly**



**Mighty Mitch &
Jungle Joe's
Jigflies -
Summer Edition!**

By Samantha Neureuther, NOSA Member

If you don't already know of Mighty Mitch & Jungle Joe's (MM&JJ), they are the father-son duo of Joe and Mitch Kostecki, from Terrace Bay, ON. They have recently moved their family run business to our beautiful city of Thunder Bay. They have been in the business of making hand tied specially crafted Jig-flies for over 25 years.

MM&JJ has grown their business tremendously over the years. Orders are hand tied locally and then shipped to many different places around Canada and the United States. They're very popular around Northern Ontario – and for good reason, it's because they work! The jig-flies can be found in many different bait and tackle shops throughout Ontario. They are hand tied, to precise detail and perfection, made with the highest quality materials.

The Brook Trout patterns have become the “go-to” for guides and anglers on the famous Nipigon River and area, in Nipigon Ontario, as many would be brookie anglers seek to land the big, beautiful trophy Brook Trout lurking in those waters.

The Jig-flies produce fish in each season from summer to winter, on open water or through the ice. But with summer upon us, I am often asked which of the MM&JJ patterns work best during the open water warm season. The following are the most popular and requested patterns for the summer season to get you on those fish!

The Smelt Pattern - Crafted with white and black bucktail, peacock herl feathers, and crystal flash made to look like – you guessed it- a Smelt! The UV coating also gives it the extra flash in the water making it more noticeable to fish. Target species for the smelt pattern are Lake Trout, Brook Trout, Walleye, Bass, Northern Pike. Pretty much any fish that is hungry!

The Gord Ellis “GE” Specials – “The Orange Crush” and the “Bronze Boomer” both carry the Gord Ellis (GE) endorsement! Both are uniquely made with feathered bucktail spikes on the neck, peacock herl feathers, crystal flash and UV coating. Target Species for the GE special patterns; they are especially irresistible to Brook Trout, but work for all other species as well.

Katie Ball “KB” Special - Specially hand tied with fur from local trapper and fur garment creator, Katie Ball – Made with bucktail, herl feathers, crystal flash and UV coating. This is another summer favorite for Brook Trout and Lake Trout but has proven successful on Walleye and Bass as well.

The Dace Minnow - The Dace Minnow pattern Jig-Fly is a popular choice for summer Walleye, Bass, and Northern Pike, as it closely replicates their favorite snack, the dace minnow. Made with bucktail, herl feathers, crystal flash and UV coating.

While out on your fishing adventures, make sure to add one of these MM&JJ to your tackle box this summer! Orders can be done direct to Joe at Mighty Mitch and Jungle Joe's Jig Flies through his Facebook, Instagram and at local retail suppliers like D&R Sporting Goods or The Falls Bait & Tackle.



**The ever popular
Gord Ellis pattern
MM&JJ Jig-Fly**

Fall Black Bear: Spot and Stalk Hunting



**Cole Jacobson with
a spot and stalk
fall black bear**

By Rich Brochu, NOSA Member

I first started hunting for bears shortly after the cancellation of the spring bear hunt in 1999. I figured back then, I'd do my part in keeping the bear numbers in check as the spring bear hunt had been eliminated for reasons that in my opinion, made no sense. I spent many years hearing about black bear hunting but had never experienced it firsthand. It was obvious that my hunting grounds had loads of bears, so I decided to take up the challenge with my son. Surprisingly, we started hunting for them utilizing the "Spot and Stalk" method. Being an avid hunter, I purchased many videos displaying this method of hunting and wanted to try it out for myself.

Experiences that I put into play were all the encounters I witnessed in the past re-

garding bears. I had many encounters due to the amount of time I've spend in the forest and could use this to my advantage. Spring reminded me of the times I ran into bears eating grass on the sides of roads and late summer also reminded me of bears grazing on berries. Due to no spring hunt being allowed at the time, I would have to concentrate on a late summer/early fall hunt. With that thought, my desire to hunt the spot and stalk method was born. Today, it remains to be my preferred method of hunting this incredible creature.

Bears are creatures of habit like most animals in the forest. They are not territorial- they are solitary. Home ranges may overlap between male and female bears, and it also depends on food abundance. If food is scarce then a black bear's range will be greater than an area that has more food. Food is a driving force in a bear's life. It's all about putting on fat for the long winter hibernation. Fortunately, mid summer usually bring a plethora of wild edibles they can't resist. Knowing this makes spot and stalk hunting for these bruins more attainable.

Last year the berries were in such abundance that in a way it made it more difficult to find bears. I hunted hard for them, but they appeared to have limited their range. Most likely, they spent the day in the shade full of berries resting for the night to come. This year having scouted several areas, the bears appear to be working harder at finding berries in certain areas. Fortunately, I've seen a few bears feeding during these trips and can develop a game plan for when the season opens. Berries are not in abundance as they were last year but there is enough to keep them foraging during daylight hours.

The best times for locating the bruins in the berry patch is early morning, mid afternoon and often at dusk. Spot and stalk hunting is as simple as walking into an open cut with a good crop of berries. Looking for signs of bear tracks in the sand will immediately tell you if they are around. If tracks are found near berry bushes, that bear will most likely return. Setting yourself up on a hill with a great view of the area will help locate them when they are ready to venture out. A good pair of binoculars will help you decide if the animal is large enough to pursue. Having said that bears are not territorial will also let you know that it may not be the only one coming to the buffet.

Bears have great noses on them. On a few occasions I've found myself watching a bear sniff the air when I've been at a distance watching him. Once they pinpoint you, they usually high tail it back into the forest. Stealth and caution is always key when hunting these bruins. Despite their resistance to humans, they are unpredictable creatures. Personally spot and stalk hunting for bears offers the challenge and excitement I look for when hunting bruins. I look forward to returning to the areas I've scouted and see if any other bears have visited the berry patches. Bear hunting will soon be in season, and I look forward to heading out again this year to try and find a bruin that will fit the bill. Summer is half over and soon hunting will be the focus on many outdoor men and woman's minds. Cheers....!



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The Northwestern Ontario Sportsmen's Alliance attends 55th North American Moose Conference



In early June, the North American Moose Conference hosted its 55th annual conference, held in Grand Portage Minnesota and NOSA Executive Director John Kaplanis was invited to attend and speak at the conference.

With some 200 plus moose biologists, researchers, and wildlife agency heads from across North American, and few from Finland and Sweden, the conference was a virtual “who’s who” of the worldwide moose research field. Many of the presentations and seminars that were unveiled at the conference, were related to the ongoing studies of the challenges that moose populations face in North America particularly in the North-eastern portion of Minnesota, which lies just south of Northwestern Ontario.

NOSA Executive Director John Kaplanis spoke to conference attendees about the important contributions of hunters as part of ongoing moose management, providing mandatory reporting information and injecting millions of dollars in revenue to moose program research and monitoring through license sales in Ontario. John Kaplanis also participated in a workshop entitled “Multinational and Indigenous Co-stewardship of North American Moose.” The workshop entertained perspectives about Indigenous participation in the co-management of moose across a range of jurisdictions in North America. This dialogue was carried out with respect to recognizing treaty rights and acknowledgement of the moose as an integral part of the spiritual and sustenance value of Indigenous peoples in North America.

As for the academic and peer reviewed research topics discussed throughout the seminars and presentations of the conference, the overwhelming theme behind the messaging in the research summaries seemed to point to habitat health being a prime factor in affecting moose population survival; when moose are also confronted with the challenges of living with parasites such as ticks and brain-worm, along with the pressures presented when wolves and bears are largely left unmanaged on the landscape. These limiting factors conspire against struggling moose populations, especially where forest habitat health is not kept managed for optimal benefits for moose.

As part of the conference events, NOSA donated a large, framed wildlife/moose print to assist the moose conference organizing body known as “Alces” with raising funds during the evening dinner and fundraising event at the conference. NOSA would like to thank member Terry Olsen for providing the print to John Kaplanis, to bring with him to donate to the conference on NOSA’s behalf.

Meanwhile here in Northwestern Ontario, hunters, trappers, and travelers driving regional Hwys are providing anecdotal accounts of more moose sightings and encounters, all of which is providing strong indication that moose populations are improving on this side of the border. Ontario’s hunters and trappers actively manage wolves and bears through licensed, controlled seasons, which likely contributes to increased moose calf survival, giving moose populations a chance to recover in recent years.



THIS MONTH'S NEWS

Northwestern Ontario Sportsmen's Alliance proud to sponsor AYA 2023 on the Kam River

In early July the Northwestern Ontario Sportsmen’s Alliance in cooperation with North Country Cycle and Sports hosted the 2023 youth walleye tournament known as the “Angler Young Angler” tournament, held on the Kam River. This event has been a popular one with local anglers as adults and kids team up to compete for the regional championship trophy!

The Northwestern Ontario Sportsmen’s Alliance team of volunteers was on hand to assist with the event, launching boats and weighing in fish for successful teams. The North Country Cycle and Sports team of volunteers was also on hand to set up their prize tent featuring numerous prizes and giveaways donated thanks to the generosity of local sponsors like D&R Sporting Goods, Play It Again Sports, Boston Pizza, GFL Environmental, Equipment World, Mascarin Collision Center, ACR Mechanical.

This year’s championship winning team was the team of Adam Green who

along with his two young walleye angling partners was able to bring home the win with a total bag weight of 12.20lbs that included a big fish weight of 8.59lbs! Of the roughly 35 boats entered in the tournament, several teams brought in huge walleyes as part of their bag weight, proving the health and productivity of the Kam River walleye fishery. OMNRF fisheries technicians were on hand to sample and tag and release almost all the walleyes that were brought in that day.

The AYA event has been a LUND Boats driven initiative that was started over 10 years ago, to encourage youth involvement in competitive angling. However, this will be LUND’s final year of sponsoring the popular youth walleye event across North American, which is unfortunate because of the huge popularity of the venue. Local organizers are looking forward to continuing the event in some form in the future as it does represent a valuable means of including kids and youth anglers in competitive angling and encouraging a life-long passion for fishing!



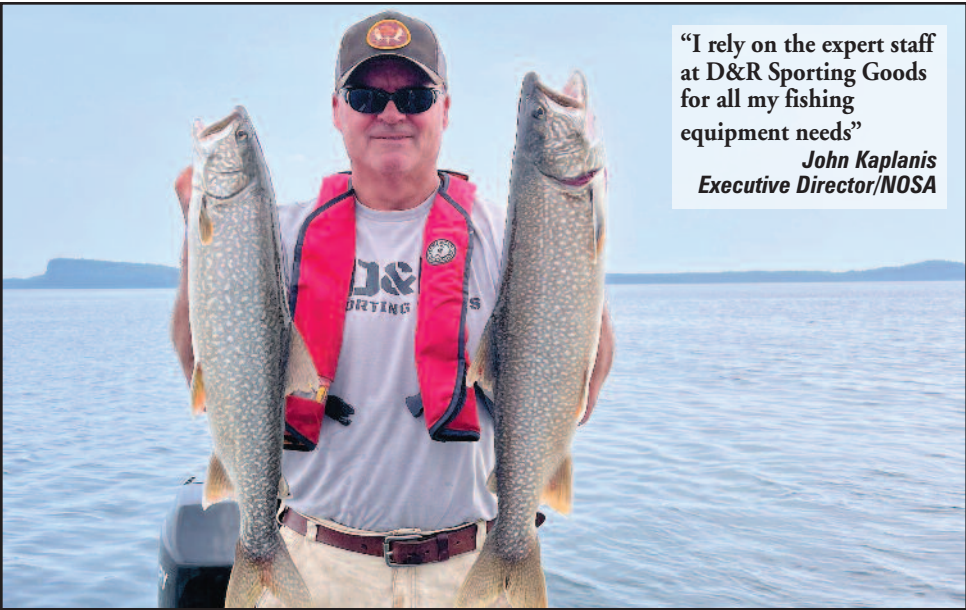
AYA organizer Mike Sawatsky with Thunder Bay AYA Champion Adam Green and youth team members



NOSA Director Shane Baker assisting AYA youth anglers



Gord Ellis with young team members and hefty walleye



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NOSA and Law-Abiding Firearms Owners attend Pierre Poilievre rally in Thunder Bay



On July 24th Pierre Poilievre and the Conservative Part of Canada held a meet and greet/rally in Thunder Bay and the Northwestern Ontario Sportsmen's Alliance members were part of the hundreds in attendance to support Poilievre's bid to become Canada's next Prime Minister. Poilievre and the Conservative Party are clearly digging in for an election battle intended to wrench control from the hands of the Trudeau Liberals and give it back to Canadians who are fed up with being over taxed, rising inflation costs and draconian restrictions being placed upon them in regards to firearms control and online censorship.

The Thunder Bay firearms community was well represented in the audience with members of the Thunder Bay Fish and Game association, the New Ontario Shooters Assoc., and the Thunder Bay Combat Club all in attendance. Notably, there were many off-duty law enforcement personnel, demonstrating that even Canadian police officers support voting in a leader who respects law abiding firearms ownership and has a real working plan for reducing firearm related violent crimes and the criminal smuggling of guns into Canada.

Northwestern Ontario Sportsmen's Alliance member Michele Vardy was in attendance and after the rally in an interview she said this, "Poilievre and the Conservatives give me faith that, if elected, my tax dollars won't be squandered, and they are the only political party that support legal firearms owners. They understand we are not the problem and instead the Conservatives will direct efforts to go after real criminals and not hunters."

It's a simple formula, but we believe Michele is correct in thinking that the Conservatives will be a far better alternative than a Liberal/NDP coalition government that has dragged the Canadian economy down while restricting the rights and freedoms of law-abiding Canadians like no other government in the history of this great nation.



THIS MONTH'S NEWS

29th Annual Ontario Fur Managers Federation Convention coming to Thunder Bay in August

On August 25-26 the Ontario Fur Managers Federation will be welcomed to Thunder Bay for their 29th Annual membership convention, which is open to the public! The Northwestern Ontario Sportsmen's Alliance is proud to support the host trapper's council, the Northwestern Fur Trappers Assoc. as they administer and host the event for the OFMF. The event will be open to the public with a vendor expo at the CLE in the Coliseum building starting at 0900 on Friday August 25th and running through until 3pm on the afternoon of Saturday Aug 26th. An evening dinner and fundraising event will be hosted at the Valhalla Inn on Saturday August 26th. For more information see the event poster featured in this publication with contacts listed.

The OFMF is an organization working for thousands of trappers in Ontario. The OFMF holds a

business agreement in cooperation with the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (OMNRF) and is responsible for training, licensing, and collecting annual reports for trappers. In addition, the OFMF carries out public education to carry the message about the positive contributions made by trappers who manage fur bearers sustainably to the benefit of other wildlife species and to protect property and infrastructure by controlling fur bearer numbers, protecting from damage and loss due to nuisance fur bearer activities such as beavers obstructing road, hydro and railway right of ways, and limiting the spread of rabies by controlling certain fur bearer populations.

Come see us at the CLE on August 25th and Aug.26th !! There will be fun activities and vendor displays of equipment and merchandise related to trapping and

the outdoors. See you there!

For more information contact Northwestern Fur Trappers Assoc at nwfta@outlook.com



2023 OFMF

TRAPPER CONVENTION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING & RENDEZVOUS

HOSTED BY Northwestern Region in Zone 2A and Georgian Bay Trappers Council

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- Terry Fox Monument
- Sleeping Giant

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

THURSDAY – SETUP

FRIDAY – PUBLIC WELCOME
Canadian Lakehead Exhibition
(Vendors) Open
Dinner by Cash Donation
Annual General Meeting

9 am - 4 pm
6 pm
7 pm

SATURDAY – PUBLIC WELCOME:
Canadian Lakehead Exhibition

(Vendors) Open
Pancake Breakfast
by Cash Donation

9 am - 3:30 pm
8 am - 9 am

SATURDAY EVENING – PUBLIC WELCOME:
Dinner, Awards, Banquet, Fashion Show and Auction

Cocktail Hour

5:30 pm

Banquet Dinner & Awards
Live Auction, Social to follow
Fashion Show

6:30pm

CONTACTS

Katie Ball: 807-630-0305
E: ball_kathleen@hotmail.com
Ryan Cardy T: 807-630-1676
E: ryancardy@icloud.com



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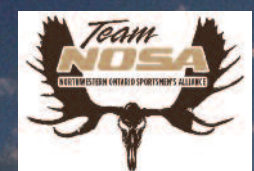
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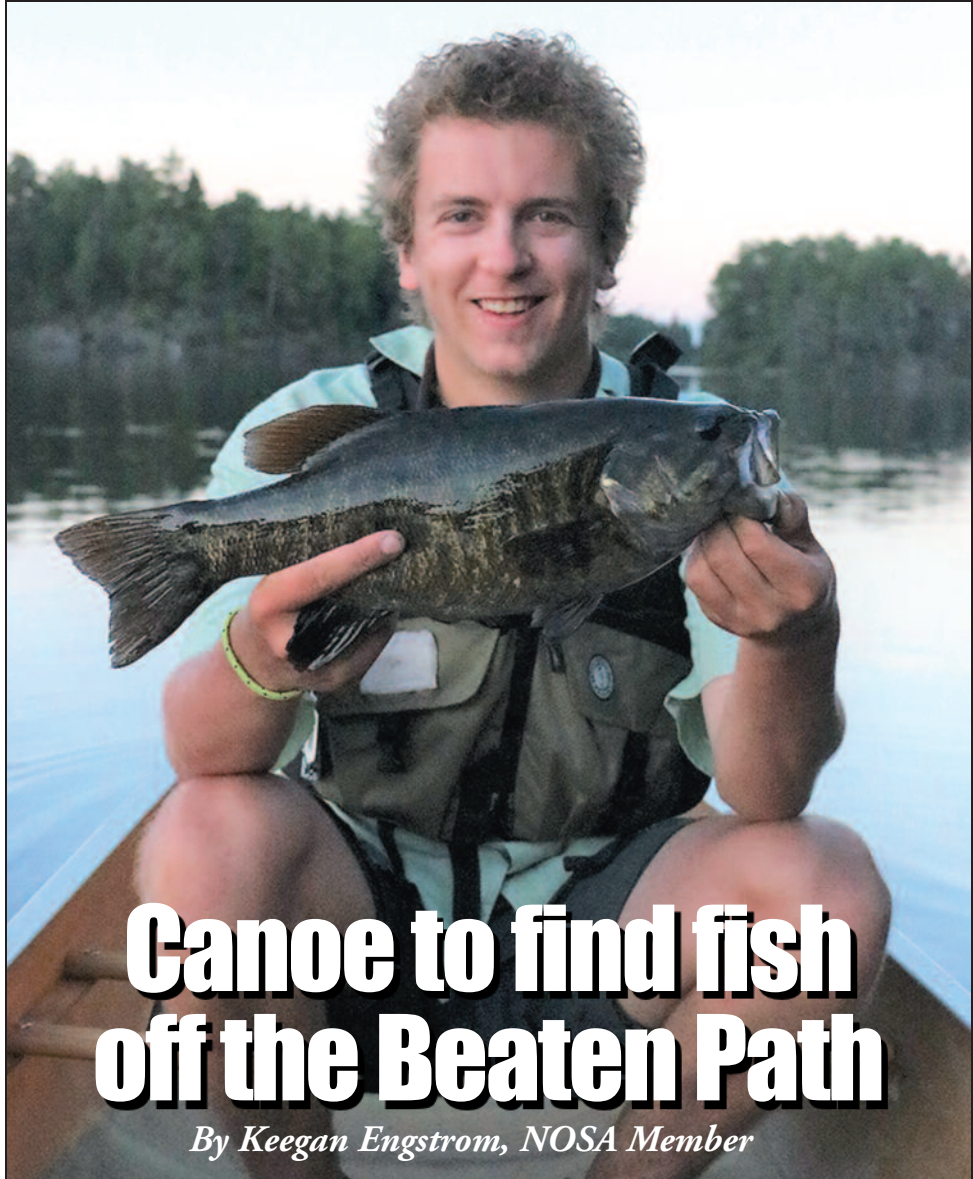
Find out how by visiting us at: www.teamnosa.com

NOSA ANNUAL GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING SCHEDULED

September 5th - Annual General Meeting of the Membership of the Northwestern Ontario Sportsmen's Alliance, 7:00pm - Westfort Prosvita Hall (upstairs) located at 721 W. Gore St.

Agenda will consist of reports of directors, elections, as well as listening to members concerns, ideas, or proposals for the coming year. Of particular interest to the NOSA board of directors is what your views are on the current moose tag points system, as well as we are interested in hearing your views on fisheries management issues related to the region.

There will be attendance draws so come out and meet the board of directors and be eligible for some cool Team NOSA swag and prizes!



Canoe to find fish off the Beaten Path

By Keegan Engstrom, NOSA Member

With the summer solstice in the rear-view, it means we are now amidst the open water season. The middle of summer can provide many opportunities for recreational boating and fishing. One of my favourite pastimes is backcountry canoeing, which also means backcountry fishing. Using a canoe enables an angler to reach far into the pristine wilderness surrounding Thunder Bay. No longer is one handcuffed by lack of roads or rough boat launches. A canoe can be portaged down the rough trails or through the bush to those elusive lakes that are buried in the forest and often just glossed over on maps.

There are few things that beat sliding out onto a mist filled lake with nothing but nature creating sounds around you, save for the swirling of water from a paddle stroke. That feeling of solitude and peacefulness while enjoying the sunrise is hard to beat! The bonus with these back lakes is that since the access is more difficult, these lakes tend to have less fishing pressure.

Canoes can come in a variety of sizes, hull shapes, and with or without square sterns. Square stern canoes offer the ability to easily attach an electric motor or small gas-powered engine which can be helpful when traversing large windy lakes. I prefer the more traditional prospector canoe style, which allows for easy maneuverability while paddling and tracks well in windy conditions. At the end of the day, if your canoe floats, it will work for fishing.

With canoe fishing there is also a few things to consider when packing your fishing gear. The lighter you can make your tackle bag the better. Your tackle box will look slightly different depending on the species you are targeting on that given day but try and keep the tackle box as light as possible. When assembling your collection of lures try and to keep baits that will do multiple styles of fishing. Jig heads and twister tail grubs, which can be casted, trolled, and jigged make ideal choices as do spoons like Little Cleo's and Dardevle's. A small collection of crankbaits will also be tossed in depending on the target species. When picking your rod and reel, 2-piece rods are much easier to portage into lakes vs 1 piece and a short rod between 6-7ft makes landing fish beside the canoe much easier. A small net makes landing fish and unhooking them much easier and prevents the havoc of a flopping fish and exposed hooks beside your feet. One of the most helpful implements for trolling with a canoe is a small removable rod holder which allows your hands to be free to paddle.

Part of the enjoyment that comes from canoe fishing is the simplicity of it, no loud motors, or fancy electronics. This is where learning how to read a lakes shoreline to have an educated guess on what the structure under the surface is. Steep hills or rock faces will mean sharp drop offs and very little structure on the drop until you reach bottom, which can be great lake trout fishing. Whereas the gentle sloping, cobbly shoreline generally means shallower water rich in structure, prime habitat for walleye, pike, and bass.

When angling for lake trout during the summer months you need to get lures deep, and on canoes the downriggers are not an option so using a 3-way swivel to connect a large bell sinker allows you to troll at a deep depth without needing have your whole spool of line trolling behind you. Vertical jigging is also a great option, letting the wind drift you around while jigging the water is a very popular technique. Walleyes are probably the most popular fish to target in general, using a canoe to push into the wilderness lakes allow you to chase fish that may not have seen a lure in years and are much easier to fool. Trolling the shorelines with a deep diving crankbait is my preferred technique to locate them. Once you've located the schools, you can switch to a jig and twister combo to hone in on them.

As with any boating activity, make sure you have a lifejacket on and an up-to-date boat safety kit, and a small dry bag with a spare change of clothes in case an accidental dunk in the water occurs. Canoe fishing offers a simple and peaceful fishing experience. I wish all northwestern Ontario anglers the best on the canoe fishing adventures this summer!

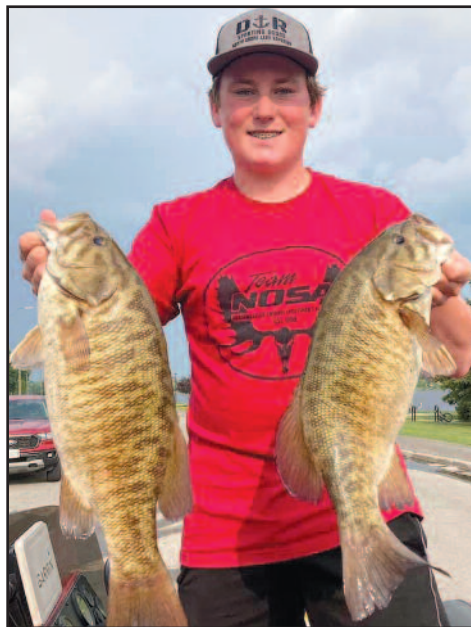
Members In The Field



Membership Director Bruno Fornaro and a mid summer walleye



Brittany Gravel with a beautiful coaster brookie



NOSA sponsored tournament bass angler Parker Lindsay



Matt Kaplanis with a nice summer walleye



Emily Nixon with a chunky Nipigon Brook trout



Sisters Carly and Aubrey Fisher enjoy catching walleye together



Mark Deans and daughter Kayla land a nice walleye

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