

#### OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE NORTHWESTERN ONTARIO SPORTSMEN'S ALLIANCE

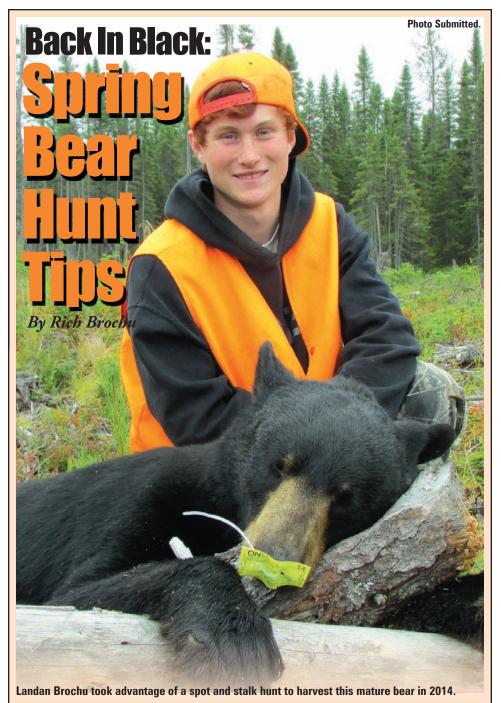


In The Next Issue:

**Angler Youth Angler Update Summer Smallie Action** 

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Well here we go, the second year of the pilot project re-introducing the spring bear hunt to certain parts of Northern Ontario. This highly contested topic will be studied again with the help of hunters. The pros and cons will be weighed and a lasting decision as to whether or not a spring bear hunt is acceptable will be determined. Hunters will wait in anticipation for this verdict and hope it materializes. As a hunter, I applaud the opportunity to hunt spring bear hunt. Bears are a sustainable big game animal that in recent years have increased significantly in numbers. Controlling their numbers is equally important to hunters and wildlife managers.

I have to admit bear hunting was never a big part of my hunting experiences until about eight years ago. The reason I became interested in bear hunting was due to the increased number of bears I witness in the bush, either picking berries or on fishing trips. Spending most of my leisure time in the wild I have been privy to encountering bears on a regular basis. I decided since the spring bear hunt was no longer in effect I should play a part in helping control the bear population by hunting them in the fall.

Most bear hunters utilize a bear bait to attract the bruins to a food source. Personally I prefer the spot and stalk method of hunting bears. This method has worked for my son and I and we have been very successful in encountering bears in our travels. We find it very exciting and challenging. This method works great in the fall when the berries are ripe and the bears are gorging themselves for the winter. Bait also offers a great opportunity to entice a bruin to come in and fill its belly. This method utilizes placement of a chained barrel filled with goodies including anything sweet to scraps of meat. Once bears find the food source they will return and in time other bears will also be visiting the site. My favorite attractant is molasses from Boles Feed. Molasses has a strong sweet smell that attracts bears from a long distance. Setting up with a ground blind or a tree stand helps a hunter be well positioned for the encounters that will take place. Mornings and evenings offer you a better chance at seeing a bruin come in to eat its fill of goodies.

Identification of the bear you're hunting is very important. Methods such as baiting, gives the hunter time to identify whether or not a sow is with her cubs. It has been my experience a sow is never far from her cubs. Once danger is noticed the cubs head straight for the trees and climb up with sows keeping a close watch. Sows with cubs are not to be harvested during the spring hunt.

Once you have successfully harvested a bear you'll be surprised at how good bear meat is. I have to admit I was somewhat apprehensive when I first harvested a bear not knowing what the meat would taste like. Bear meat can be turned into some of the best smokies, Italian sausage, burger or roasts. My family, friends and I have enjoyed bear meat for the past eight years while in the process making believers out of some that were as apprehensive as I was. It is important to cook bear meat fully as it can have a parasite called Trichinosis. Keeping that in mind, the same could be said for pork but the chance is greater in bears.

If you get a chance at hunting bear this spring or fall, do your homework, get out on to your favorite hunting grounds and set up bear bait or just travel the bush roads. Open cuts about four to five years old will offer a great chance at seeing a bear in the spring or fall. Their numbers are high and they are an exciting big game animal to hunt. Enjoy the outdoors and try bear hunting this year. You may find it challenging and an experience worth trying. Also, if you do harvest a black bear be sure to report your kill as this is mandatory in Ontario.









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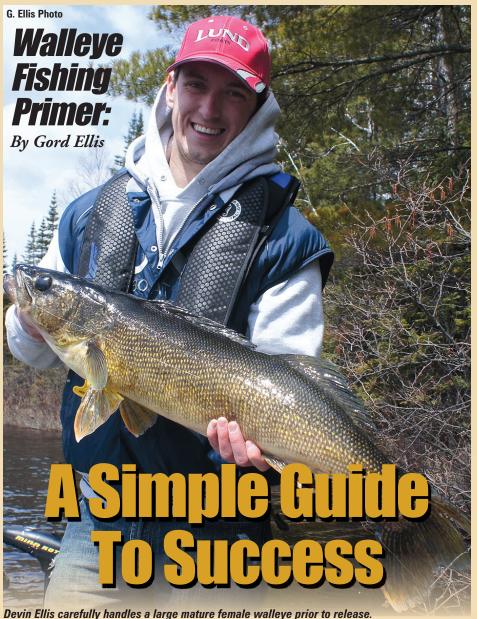
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The walleye is Northwestern Ontario's most popular sport fish. This is a given. Thanks to an intensive adult stocking program undertaken decades ago , there are many more walleye hotspots in Northwestern Ontario today than there were 100 years ago. Lakes like Whitefish, Shebandowan, Dog and Frazer all have walleye due to initial introductions by the Ministry of Natural Resources. It's hard to imagine how much things would be different today if that had never happened.

Walleye thrive in a variety of environments, though they prefer to hang out near rocky points, transitions from mud to gravel, weed lines, reefs and in current areas. Savvy walleye anglers learn the seasonal structure preferences of these fish, and key in on these areas.

Water temperature and clarity influence walleye location. Generally, the clearer the water, the tougher the bite. But clear water lakes often have the largest walleye, and are noted for having a strong dusk, dawn and night bite. Stained lakes and rivers, on the other hand, may have walleye going all day. In some of the northern rivers and lakes, walleye are so aggressive they will follow baits to the boat even on blistering sunny days.

In the post spawn period (the May opener to about mid June) walleye will congregate around rivers inlets, shallow bays, emerging weeds, reefs, gravel bars, rapids and pools close to known spawning sites. The walleye should stay shallow as long as water is cool, and it's ok to be shoreline oriented during this time. Generally, if you find a group of fish in the spring, it pays to stay on them. Drop the anchor and work the pod over.

By early summer, walleye have generally moved out to deeper structure, from 5 to 30 feet or more depending on water clarity, sun, wind and waves. Long points can provide good action beyond the drop off, or up on the top of it, if the waves are pounding the shore. If summer walleye are your game, look for mid-lake humps, sunken islands, cabbage weeds, deep river corner or pools, and main lake mud flats. This the time to NOT be shoreline oriented. Walleye in lakes tend to be found off shore in summer, on humps and bumps near deep water. This where a depth finder is a huge assistance.

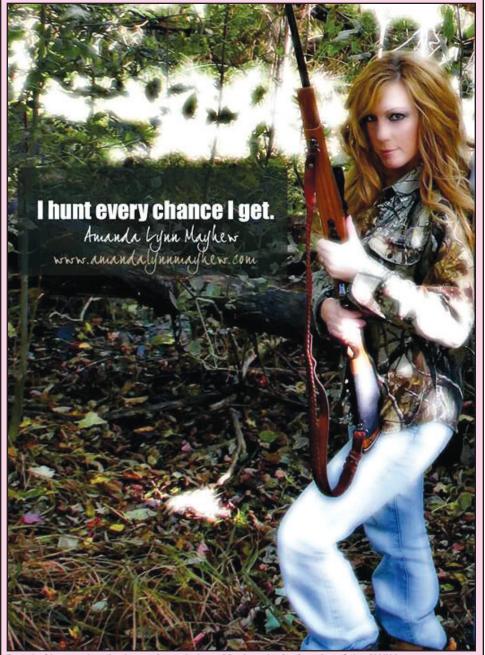
Perhaps the most overlooked time to catch Northwestern Ontario walleye is in the fall. The fish of autumn are large, hungry, and no one is fishing for them. Before turn over, seek out summer walleye structure like humps, sunken islands, wind-swept shores. After turnover, go deep, near the main lake basin on steep breaking structures.

Many types of artificial baits catch walleye, but 80% of the fish in the northwest are caught on live bait of some kind. Walleye generally prefer minnows in spring and fall, but will eat leeches and crawlers in the warmer periods. Big bait often equals big fish when after giant walleye. A 4 or 5 inch minnow is strong medicine for a trophy sized walleye.

A jig is a great presentation and is little more than a weighted hook. The bait is the thing when fishing walleye with jigs, especially in cold water. The jig draws attention to the bait, and the bait makes them bite. When the fish are aggressive, a scented rubber products can be fished without bait. Shads, grubs and even lizards can fill the plastic bill. A good selection of one quarter, one eighth, and one sixteenth ounce jig heads, plus a few yellow, white and black twister and grub bodies should be considered the must have lures on any northwest Ontario walleye expedition. Round head jigs are good for vertical fishing, while bullet heads work well in current and stand up heads shine in mud or sand. Always maintain control of your line and watch it for movement. The hits usually come on the drop.

It won't hurt to bring a few crankbaits with you, as deep diving, sinking and floating minnow baits are deadly on walleye. In spring, trolling # 5 or #7 perch Shad Raps in a sandy bay is a great way to locate roaming fish. During the summer, casting the outflow areas - or windblown shores- of a lake with a jerkbait like a Husky Jerk is a proven walleye technique.

There are many places and ways to catch walleye. Luckily, Northwestern Ontario has a lot of these golden beauties to catch.



Proud of her outdoor heritage, Amanda Lynn Mayhew is the founder of the OWHA.

# Introducing Ontario Women's Hunting Association

By Amanda Lynn Mayhew

Collaborating with the outdoors to empower and educate future hunters, and hold on to our heritage is what I am all about. The opportunity to share adventures, to listen to others and to promote women in hunting is of utmost importance to me. I have been hunting as far back as I can remember, starting my adventures in Northern Ontario where I was born and raised in Manitouwadge, first harvesting grouse and touring around in the bush just scouting and checking out different areas for moose and bears. Then as years passed I became more serious about harvesting big game such as moose and bear. After each adventure when I would return home back to Southern Ontario I would always write a feature article in my fitness magazine(Fytness Fanatik the Magazine) outlining my experience for that year.

I raised my 3 boys in the bush and on the lake so they are all well equipped to survive and hunt. As a single mom it was a little bit harder I suppose, but I didn't think twice about it. My youngest son Mackynzie, is my hunting buddy and already is 2 for 2 in the bear hunting department. He shows passion, determination and patience. All things that were important for him to learn at a young age to acknowledge the hard work that is put into hunting. Now we just have to work on his determination to field dress his harvests (wink)! I have to say my boys would eat moose and bear over chicken while growing up and still prefer the wild game. Maybe one day Mackynzie will publish the next in the series of Living off the Land Cook Books.

With the opportunity to be involved in outdoors events and shows promoting hunting, it has been an honor to be able to be the Official Ambassador of the Toronto Sportsmen's Show. In this capacity I am proud to get up on stage to share my passion for hunting, conducting speaking seminars and meeting people on the floor at the show each year. The young girls have so many questions to ask me and it is a great feeling to be a role model to a determined younger generation who is just itching to get out in the field. I am also quite proud to be a part of so many great teams; Cabela's Canada, Team NOSA, Bushbum, FXR, and Bradley Smoker are just a few of the companies who have been big supporters of what I believe in.

Over the last few years, my inbox has filled up and stayed full with questions about how to get started, where to go to shoot, who teaches hunting courses, so I created Women of the Outdoors for women to come out and try their hand at shotgun, rifle, pistol and archery with the support of local rod and gun clubs and their certified members and range officers. This event is a sold-out-in-24-hours type of event and has been running strong since 2011. Following the success of this event, I founded O.W.H.A (Ontario Women's Hunting Association). After the ladies are licensed in firearms handling and hunting certifications, we are the resource in Ontario to help get the girls on their feet, with questions regarding apparel, firearms, gear, and anything else you can think of. Organizing hunting trips, seminars and events to create a comfortable atmosphere for women to build their independence to be able to do it on their own. More information can be found on www.owhaontario.com (also on face book and twitter).

People always comment on how busy I must be, but to be honest, I manage my time quite well by making sure I always give myself more than enough time dedicated to the outdoors - where I belong!





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### THIS MONTH'S NEWS

## NOSA Wants Savanne River options on FMZ 6 Agenda



The Northwestern Ontario Sportsmen's Alliance (NOSA) is asking OMNRF to respond to concerns about the possibility of overharvest of spawning females in the early spring. This issue has been raised in several forums in recent years, as the Lac Des Milles Lacs tributary is heavily pressured by sport anglers in the initial few days of the season opener each spring.

The issue has even been raised at NOSA's annual general meeting in the past, and NOSA has always deferred the subject back to LCC groups and other OMNR officials to look into, however with increasing pressure mounting from the public and many members of the sport angling public, NOSA felt it was no

longer an issue that could be ignored.

Surprisingly, the call for an all out sanctuary on the river during the critical spawning period in the spring, has received united support from various groups. Tourist resorts, cottagers, ice anglers and resident sport anglers have all largely weighed in at some point to indicate support for a temporary sanctuary on the river to protect spawning females. NOSA's position has been to ask OMNRF to defer this matter to Fisheries Management Zone 6 to allow that body of stakeholders to make a consensus based recommendation for OMNRF to act upon.

With numerous other lakes and rivers receiving similar protections for spawning walleyes within FMZ 6 it does cause one to ask why a similar measure has not been enacted upon the Savanne River, considering that it contributes to the sustainability of a highly popular and highly pressured sport fishery on Lac Des Milles Lacs.

The question that FMZ 6 will have to answer is; will a sanctuary on the Savanne River provide a measurable level of conservation to assist in the long term sustainability of the lake? This is a serious question that must be taken into consideration, keeping in mind that by continually providing suitable conservation measures, there is greater possibility that other opportunities for sport angling on LDML will be maintained and protected for generations to come. Stay tuned for more information on this subject as it becomes available.

# Federal Conservative Government Extends Funding for Recreational Fisheries Program

Ottawa, ON - Robert Sopuck, Member of Parliament for Dauphin-Swan River-Marquette, is pleased with Economic Action Plan 2015's announcement that the Recreational Fisheries Conservation Partnerships Program (RFCPP) will be extended.

"I am very pleased that Economic Action Plan 2015 will continue to support Canada's recreational fisheries," Sopuck said. "Our Conservative Government has a proud record of taking action to improve and support Canada's fisheries."

The RFCPP was first created in Economic Action Plan 2013 with \$10 million. The Program was extended in Economic Action Plan 2014 with an additional \$15 million. Economic Action Plan 2015 extends the program for an additional three years with \$30 million, bringing the total to \$55 million in funding for recreational fisheries.

"This is an important program that has directly benefitted fisheries across Canada," said Sopuck. "Our Government has invested in fisheries projects right across Canada, including British Columbia, Ontario, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, and more. This latest announcement of funding will allow us to continue with these important projects."

The purpose of the RFCPP is to support local projects that are led by recreational fishing and angling groups as well as conservation organizations. Projects are focused on conserving fisheries habitat, improving sustainability, and increasing productivity of Canada's recreational fisheries.

"Through measures such as the Recreational Fisheries Conservation Partnerships Program and the \$252 million National Conservation Plan, our Government is committed to real results for Canada's fisheries and environment," Sopuck said.

Read more about the Recreational Fisheries Conservation Partnerships Program at: http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/pnw-ppe/rfcpp-ppcpr/index-eng.html

Read more about Economic Action Plan 2015 at: http://www.budget.gc.ca.

## NWFTA supporting NOSA



NWFTA President Ryan Cardy presents John Kaplanis with a Remington .12 ga. Shotgun for NOSA's annual dinner fundraising event.

At the Northwestern Fur Trappers Assoc. convention held in February, trappers President Ryan Cardy presented a Remington shotgun to NOSA for the purpose of fundraising at their annual dinner that was held in April. John Kaplanis, Exec. Director of NOSA graciously received the donation from the trappers stating, "For many years NOSA has committed to supporting the trappers association not only because we share a common heritage, but we also share common wildlife management objectives." Kaplanis added that the Northwestern Fur Trappers Assoc. has in recent years grown to become more visible on the political and media landscape and he credits that presence largely due to the fact that new, young and motivated trappers are showing an interest in preserving the future of their heritage. NOSA is proud to continue working positively on projects with local trappers councils.



Katie Cardy receives the 2015 NOSA Sportswoman of the Year award from NOSA Executive Director John Kaplanis.

## NOSA Sportswoman of the Year Award

For the first time ever, NOSA is proud to announce the presentation of the new Sportswoman of the Year Award to Katie Cardy. During the Northwestern Fur Trappers Assoc. dinner and awards ceremony, NOSA Exec. Director announced that he had created the award to accompany the NOSA Sportsman of the Year Award, which has been awarded annually since 2010. Kaplanis addressed the guests of the trappers convention dinner by discussing the important role that women play towards promoting and preserving the future of hunting, angling and trapping activities in Ontario. He recognized Katie Cardy as the inaugural recipient of the NOSA Sportswoman of the Year Award by highlighting her inspiring role as the energetic Secretary for the local trappers council. Kaplanis noted that Katie Cardy is especially driven to organize important events that focus on promoting trapping and youth involvement in the outdoors, citing her role as an important ambassador for the outdoors.

## **NOSA Annual General Meeting**

The Northwestern Ontario Sportsmen's Alliance (NOSA) will host an annual general meeting for members only on June 17th at 7:00pm at the Westfort Prosvita on Gore St. Meeting agenda will include ongoing business items of the organization, updates by directors, new business and elections of new board of directors. This is a great opportunity to come out and speak your mind on issues that you feel should be addressed by NOSA in the coming year. All members paid in full are welcome.



THIS MONTH'S NEWS

Moose Management:

# NOSA responds to recent media statements on Moose Reg. Changes

By John Kaplanis, Exec. Director

I've fielded more calls and emails on this subject in the past two months, than any topic other than the spring bear hunt controversy. It would be an understatement to say that the importance of our moose resource and moose hunting are both very important to northerners. Both are much more than that to many northern Ontario residents

With new changes passed for next moose hunting season, many want to know how the changes came to be, and what good will they offer for moose and hunters in the future. I will provide what I know about the changes, and how they came to be. I can say this; no organization out there can claim that they were not consulted before OMNR made the management decision that was made. We all saw it coming.

It is no secret that I do not agree with the concept of confidentiality on matters relating to the management of a publicly held wildlife resource that our publicly funded government is entrusted to protect and conserve. I won't breach that barrier, however I will explain how NOSA weighed in on the subject of moose management because at no time has NOSA made it a secret where we stand on this topic and at no time did we flip-flop on it. Readers can decipher for themselves how our recommendations were received by government and other organizations who claim to either represent the moose resource or moose hunters in Ontario. For certain entities it would seem the two are mutually exclusive. For NOSA however, they are not.

From the earliest of discussions which took place first at the OMNR hosted Moose Focus session held here in Thunder Bay in November of 2014, representing NOSA I made it clear at that time, that a combined cow/calf season starting on the rifle opener, where calves could be hunted concurrently with cows for a limited period of time - would be a better option than the one currently adopted with the two week calf hunting season allocation beginning two weeks after the rifle opener. But the sense I got from the feedback on this was that other stakeholders at this meeting were not entirely in favor of a shortened cow/calf combination season.

In fact, as negotiations on this subject wore on, it became apparent that many stake-holder groups were actually comfortable with leaving the harvest management regulations as status-quo. In fact, one group recently put up a press response when the changes were posted to the EBR, and in it the group actually points to the current moose tag allocations process as a sufficient means to control harvest by stating: "The existing adult tag allocation system already allows biologists to tightly control the harvest of adult moose.." This simply leaves many people scratching their heads, when one considers that same organization's current media approach provides scathing criticism of OMNR's tag cutting measures.

For NOSA however, more adult tag cuts as per the existing system, was never an acceptable option. We had heard loud and clear from our members that it was time for moose management change, and for one reason only; to assist moose populations with recovery. Why? Because a stable or growing moose population means more adult validation tags. Simple as that.

And this is really the underlying crux of the whole issue. Unless you acknowledge that moose are declining in much of northern Ontario, then there is nothing that will convince you that change is necessary. I am proud to say, NOSA's membership, speaking through their board of directors, has in fact acknowledged the decline and their response to this has centered on moose conservation - first! While other entities point to the loss of moose "hunting opportunity" as a result of the recent harvest management strategy, NOSA contends that unless our moose population is turned around, we will lose much more hunting opportunity in the future. This is what we are trying to avoid.

On the eve of the OMNR moving forth with an EBR (environmental bill of rights) posting on the moose management season changes, I spoke at length with OFAH's President via telephone. It was a positive conversation. When the call ended, I was convinced that we both agreed that while the proposed regulations weren't ideal, we could live with them and continue to work with OMNRF on improvements as time went on. For that reason NOSA agreed to cooperate with OMNRF by supporting the changes. What OFAH has done since, is their business. I cannot comment for them. But for NOSA's part, as far as we were concerned, change was coming and it was long overdue.

There have since been numerous comments in media and opinion editorials by self identified moose experts of all sorts. The common thread to these comments is the criticism of moose management direction and how it affects - hunting opportunity. This is unfortunate.

NOSA's position is unchanged and we're not in this to win a popularity contest. NOSA's priority is on moose population health - first. NOSA and many northern resident moose hunters support the Minister in moving moose management policy toward a change. NOSA expects that this will include important policy changes on predator and habitat management in Phase II of the program. This is vital.

Unless moose population health improves, more hunting opportunity will be lost, adult validation tags will be reduced and economic/tourism benefits will suffer. Hopefully some short term pain now will result in long term benefits for moose in the future.

## Harper Government extends firearms compliance measures

This week the Honourable Steven Blaney, Canada's Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, announced that the Harper Government has extended regulatory measures intended to encourage compliance with federal firearms legislation.

To make it easier for firearms owners to comply with the Firearms Act and the Criminal Code, our Government will continue to provide an amnesty for owners of non-restricted firearms with expired licences who are taking steps to come into compliance by applying for and obtaining a firearms licence, in addition to facilitating the renewal of expired Possession Only Licences (POL), until May 16, 2017.

#### Quick Fact

- The purpose of firearms licensing is to ensure that, in the interest of public safety, individuals are properly trained and screened to possess firearms.
- Licences are valid for five years and specify the ability to possess and/or acquire a specific class of firearm.
- To remain lawfully entitled to possess firearms, individuals must renew a licence prior to its expiry.
- The Canadian Firearms Program is part of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Specialized Policing Services, and is responsible for the administration of the Firearms Act, which governs the possession, transportation, use and storage of firearms in Canada.

For further information, please visit the Canadian Firearms Program (CFP) or call the RCMP Canadian Firearms Program at: 1-800-731-4000.

"Our Government supports safe and sensible firearms policies. This initiative continues our strong record of reducing red tape for those who obey the law, while cracking down on the criminal use of firearms." - Steven Blaney, Canada's Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness.



## NOSA supports 2015 Salmon Fun Derby

NOSA is proud to announce our continued support of the Thunder Bay Salmon Association's annual Salmon Fun Derby! This year the event will only be held for 3 days from July 17-19 with all weigh ins to be at Prince Arthur Marina directly beside the boat launch area. Tickets for the event will be available at D&R Sporting Goods throughout the month of June. For more information about the fun filled event that features great prizes, visit D&R Sporting Goods to inquire.

## **UPCOMING EVENTS:**

June 7 - Frazer Lake Walleye Classic
June 13 & 14 - Garry's Automotive Invitational
3D archery tournament at Lakehead Archery Club
June 20 & 21 - Dryden Walleye Masters
June 27 & 28 - Geraldton Walleye Tournament

July 4 - Angler Young Angler Thunder Bay Walleye Tournament

July 18 & 19 - Shebandowan Smallmouth Showdown Bass tournament

July 25 & 26 - Riverside Outdoors 3D archery tournament at Lakehead Archery Club July 31-Aug. 2 - Nakina Bass Tournament





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## Take the 3D Archery Challenge

By Tom Armstrong, NOSA Director

With winter finally releasing its grip on Northwestern Ontario, and Spring showing itself, we're generally pretty excited to get out and do those things we've been looking forward to all winter long; fishing, camping, BBQ, and of course some outdoor archery practice. Many archers, whether hunters or recreational, shoot all year, taking advantage of indoor ranges. But there's something to be said about shooting outdoors, and with Spring finally upon us, it gives archers a renewed vigor to get out and practice, and maybe dig out their gear after a winter of little use.

A great way to get out shooting, is getting involved in a 3D archery competition. These events are great fun, and great practice for hunters and target shooters alike. These events at Lakehead Archers are setup on a trail through the woods, with 30 targets featured throughout the trail system. You walk the trail, stopping at each of the 30 stations, which have 3D targets set up at unknown distances. This adds to the challenge, requiring you to accurately estimate the range, and make an accurate shot. Some targets are set up in trees, behind branches, at odd angles, or require shooting from a blind or a stand, thus adding to the realism and challenge of these shoots. It is very interactive, entertaining and really just a fun way to get some good real world practice. Targets range from oversize frogs, to 6' dinosaurs, and full size moose, caribou or bears. It can be a great outing for hunters and target shooters alike, and a great way to introduce kids or new shooters to the sport, as it's a very interactive, entertaining shoot. Even those that don't shoot can tag along; I've seen a number of parents/spouses along for the walk while others are shooting.

In Thunder Bay, Lakehead Archers offers several 3D shoots throughout the year, and also offer an outdoor and indoor range that's open year round. Individuals or families can get a membership at the club, or there are several times a week people can drop in and shoot on club nights, Mon/Wed/Fri 7-9pm and Sundays 1-3pm. If you don't have your own equipment and want to try it out, there is rental equipment available as well. The 3D course is setup several times a year, with this latest shoot being the annual "Rubber Boot Shoot", which is sponsored by NOSA and D&R Sporting Goods. At each of the 3D shoots, there are great draw prizes available, like the new compound bow package offered by NOSA and D&R as the door prize for this last shoot. The dates for the next 3D shoots this year are;

-June 13th & 14th- Garry's Automotive Invitational -July 25th & 26th- Riverside Outdoors 3D Shoot -Sept 12th & 13th- Hunter Round 3D Shoot

If you're new to 3D shoots, here are a few things you may want to bring along:

- Binoculars: a necessity for accurate shooting, allowing you to see the target rings on the 3D targets for your best score.
- Arrow puller: some 3D targets can prove difficult to remove arrows from, so an arrow puller can prevent some grunting and groaning trying to remove arrows.
- field points-make sure you have field points, as you can't shoot broadheads at the 3D targets.
- Bugspray/thermacell: NW Ontario woods....enough said.

Crossbow hunters are also welcome, every shoot there are participants doing the course with crossbows, you can shoot all the 3D targets all the same. So whether you have an old bow that hasn't been out of the basement in years, your compound, longbow or crossbow, get it out and get out to the next 3D shoot in June.

See lakeheadarchers.com for more info.

## NOSA Members In The Field

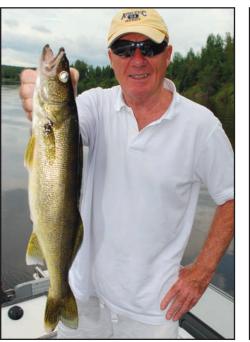




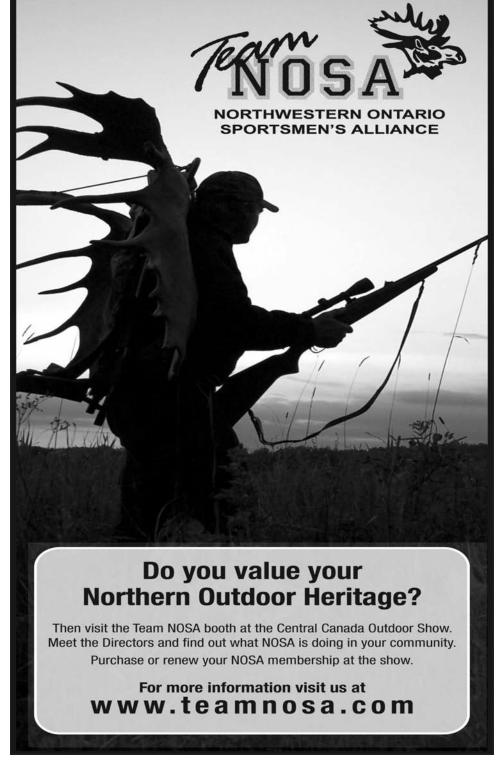














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