

Wild horses, burros up for adoption

By Lem Messer
outdoors writer

You can adopt a wild horse or wild burro from the Wild West Aug. 17-19 by travelling only as far as western Washtenaw County.

The place will be the Michigan Livestock Exchange, 9534 M-53, Manchester.

"These animals are wild, and they're more afraid of humans than people are of them," said G. Curtis Jones Jr., director of the U.S. Bureau of Land Management for the eastern states.

"Adopters are always needed to help us solve the problem of overpopulation among wild horses and burros on public rangelands," Jones said. Already BLM has found homes for more than 49,000 wild "excess" horses and burros. "Thousands more must be removed this year in order to prevent serious harm to the range and to the herds themselves," he said.

With care and patience, these wild animals can be tamed and used for riding, farmwork, showing, breeding or other noncommercial purposes.

"We really appreciated the interest shown by residents in western Michigan a few years ago. We decided to give southeastern Michigan residents a better chance to obtain animals this year."

Adoption fees are \$205 per horse and \$130 per burro. These fees help cover the BLM's cost of veterinary care, feed and transportation.

Available are 90 wild horses from Oregon and Wyoming and 75 wild burros from Arizona. An adopter may obtain up to four animals.

Adopters should have at least some experience with wild animals, along with adequate shelter and corrals space — with sturdy fencing. For 12 months after adoption, the animals remain federal property. After that, the adopter may receive title from BLM.

Applications and information about the Adopt-A-Horse program are available by writing to the Federal Information Center, 477 Michigan Ave. Room N25, Detroit 48226, or by calling 226-7016.

"Walk-up" applications will be accepted from people who stop at the Michigan Livestock Exchange.

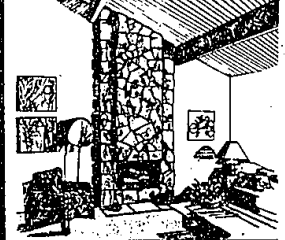
THERE'S NO guarantee you'll catch 'em, particularly in August heat, but here is the state Department of Natural Resources' report on its fish surveys of area lakes, according to biologists Ron Spiller and Andy Nuhfer:

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outdoors

— This 300-acre lake was reclaimed in 1981 and is excellent for largemouth bass, promising for tiger muskies and good to excellent for bluegills. A spring netting survey showed 51 largemouth bass, eight of them legal size of 12 inches and the average 10.1 inches. Tiger muskies averaged just under the legal size of 30 inches. The 1,600 bluegill averaged six inches.

• Pontiac Lake, west of Pontiac in Oakland County — A spring netting survey showed 108 northern pike plus many fat, large crappies. A later electrofishing survey showed 66 largemouth bass of all sizes, indicating they have recovered nicely from the winterkill with restocking. Although carp are still abundant, Pontiac's fishing is better than it has been in years.

• Orchard Lake, Oakland County — This 780-acre lake has been planted with varieties of trout for decades. Although brown trout were stocked in the past two years, surveys failed to find any, nor have anglers reported catching any. DNR now plans to give up trying to stock trout in Orchard.

The survey did find good populations of panfish, excellent largemouth and smallmouth bass supplies and an almost unfished population of big pike.

• Stony Creek Reservoir, northeast of Rochester, Macomb County — Fishing pressure is light, although this 500-acre lake is Macomb's only public inland lake. In recent years, 12,000 fingerling walleyes were planted. A May survey located

eight walleyes in the 15-18 inch range. Anglers report catching legal walleyes (16 inches) with some regularity.

Stony's black crappie population averaged a whopping 10.9 inches in the survey. Excellent northern pike and largemouth bass are there — for those who know how to find 'em.

• Lakeville Lake, Addison Township, Oakland County — Tons of big carp and stunted panfish were killed off in 1993. This spring a survey showed a nine-fold increase in percentage of bluegills longer than seven inches and a two-fold increase in the percentage of black crappies more than 10 inches. Of 33 northern pike, 25 were legal size of 20 inches or longer. Carp were only one-third as abundant.

HURON-CLINTON Metroparks have a batch of nature programs in the days ahead. To register, call the metroparks toll-free number, 1-800-532-6772.

• Kensington, near New Hudson — "Into an August Sunset," nature walk at 8 this evening, at the nature center, "Preserving the Harvest," on food preservation, 1 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 12, farm center.

• Oakwoods, near Flat Rock — "Poisonous Plants," a nature walk, 2 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 12.

SURPLUS materials, supplies and equipment will be sold by HCMA at public auction at the central warehouse of Kensington Metropark starting at 9 a.m. Saturday, Aug. 11. You can get a preview look 8-9 a.m. at used cars, trucks, lawn care equipment, boats and office machines.

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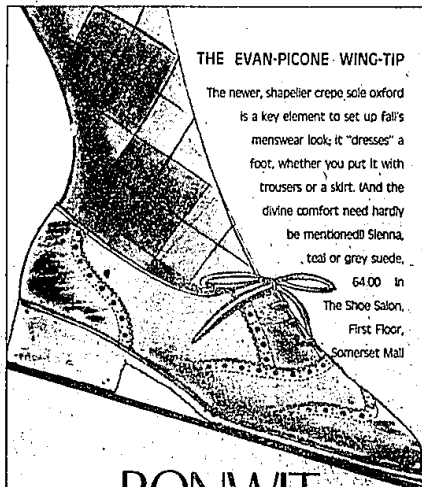
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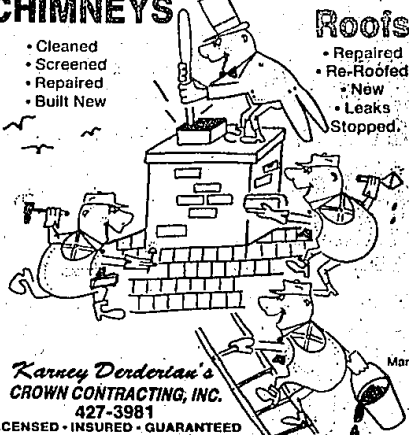
Wild horses like these are considered "excess" on western federal lands and are being brought to Manchester, Mich., Aug. 17-19 for adoption.

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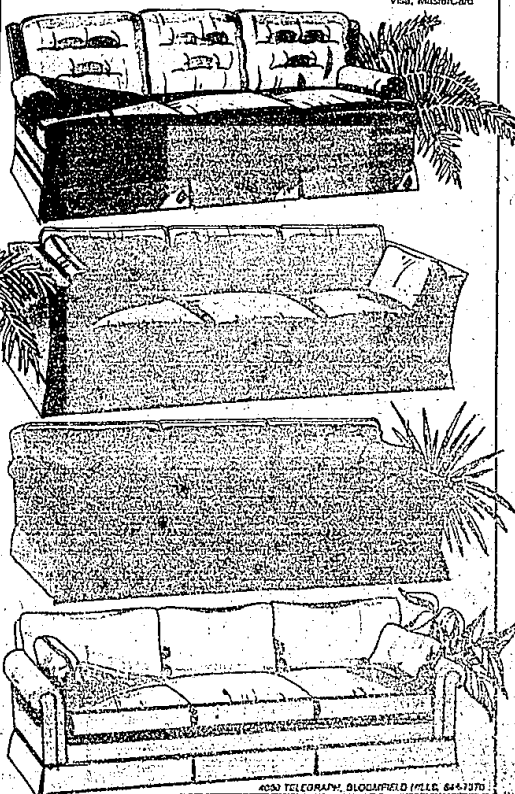
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