

Scout now for spring gobblers

IF YOU HAVEN'T received your 1991 spring wild turkey permit by now, you won't. The Michigan Department of Natural Resources, licensing division mailed out the permits last week and unsuccessful applicants should have received their refund checks this week.

If you were one of the lucky ones to receive a permit, now is the time to find your quarry.

Of all the ingredients needed for a successful spring turkey hunt, including calling technique, stand setup, camouflage and shot patterning, the most important is pre-season scouting. Let's face it, if there are no birds in the area you're hunting you'll certainly be hard pressed to bring home a tom.

WHEN HUNTING an area you're unfamiliar with, map reading and communication skills provide a good

the local DNR office usually has a supply of maps for any state land in the area while a good county map covers all the land, private and public.

Look for water — lakes, ponds, streams and creeks. When possible, a turkey will roost in a mature tree overlooking a waterway. Turkeys also need water for sustenance. Locate an area with water near a bountiful food supply — mast crops, grain fields, growing shrubs and bushes — and you're off to a great start. A creek or stream running along a mature oak ridge could be a good place to search for signs while a large, flat, scrubby tract of land with no appar-



Bill Parker
outdoors

ent water supply probably wouldn't hold a large flock of birds.

BRING A COPY of the map with you into the woods so you can mark such things as ridges, fence rows, logging trails, food supplies, roosting areas, sign and bird location for future reference.

Local residents can also be a big help, provided they aren't turkey hunters themselves (a turkey hunter will never reveal his hot spot). Mailmen, truck drivers, newspaper carriers and school bus drivers often see turkeys while driving their routes and will usually offer a little insight to a polite, courteous hunter. Local merchants such as barbers, bartenders and even grocery store clerks can also offer assistance since most live in the area and they also hear the "talk about town" while local residents filter in and out of their businesses.

ONCE YOU'VE FOUND a prime spot, the task of locating the birds in the area comes into play. Signs such as tracks, droppings, feathers and scratches let you know where are turkeys in the area.

Turkey tracks are easy to identify since they are the biggest bird in the wild. The track of a mature tom measures well over four inches from

the tip of the toe to the heel. Hen tracks are somewhat smaller. If you come across a fresh set of tracks early in the morning, you can often backtrack the tracks and find a roosting area.

Roosting areas are easily identified. Turkeys roost in large trees with branches big enough to hold their weight. They often roost in trees overlooking water. Although turkeys usually don't roost in the same tree every night, they often return to the same area to roost. The ground beneath a roosting tree will be littered with droppings and feathers.

Scratchings refer to the pattern a turkey leaves in the forest floor while looking for food. A turkey will scratch at the ground with both feet and create a "V" shape in the ground. If you look hard, you'll see claw marks and often full tracks in the dirt. An area with several fresh scratchings and a large supply of the food source remaining is a spot worth stalking out.

LOCATOR CALLS, such as an owl hoot, crow call or hawk call are also helpful in locating turkeys.

In the spring, when the love-sick tom is only interested in finding a hen, he is often cranky and aggravated by almost any loud sound. The

"hoot" of an owl or the "caw" of a crow right before dark of just after dawn will often send a tom into an loud aggressive response.

Once you've found a roosting area, a locator call will allow you to pinpoint the tree the turkey is roosting in so you can set up early the next morning.

If you are unsuccessful in finding the roosting area, try driving the back roads at dusk and dawn. Stop every 200 yards and give a "hoot" or a "caw" and wait for a response. Many hunters have great success locating a roosting bird this way.

THE BIGGEST mistake some turkey hunters make is to take their turkey calls with them while scouting to see if they can call in a tom. Once a turkey has been fooled by a particular type of call the odds are he won't be fooled by that call again for some time. If you call and speak him during scouting you might as well find another tom to hunt.

The bottom line is to get out and do your scouting now. Don't wait for opening day or you may just spend your time trying to locate a place to hunt rather than a particular bird. If you received a permit and are fortunate enough to bag a big tom turkey this spring give me a call. I'd love to hear about the hunt.

Hunters and anglers are urged to report their sightings. Questions and comments are also encouraged. Write to: Outdoors, 505 E. Maple, Birmingham, MI 48009, or call Bill Parker Monday evenings 6-10 p.m. at 644-1101.



Myrna Partrich
exercising options

'Workout for Hope' helps fight AIDS

As an exercise educator, a columnist and a human being, I feel compelled to raise your height of awareness.

As estimated, there are presently 100,000 AIDS cases in the United States and nearly 300,000 worldwide. An estimated 10 million people are already infected. This means a new AIDS victim every 12 minutes. We still have no preventative vaccine, no treatment which will result in a cure. We certainly all need help. There will be no one untouched by this horrible disease.

We need money for research, treatment and education. The City of Hope for AIDS is an important organization to help fight the battle.

Sermonists led by John J. Rossi, Ph.D., have developed a new test for the AIDS virus which will identify the virus within days of exposure. Before the test can be used, financing must be found for its mass production. It must be submitted for FDA approval and distribution details must be worked out. This test is expected to be used only for diagnosis, but to ensure the safety of the nation's blood bank supplies.

City of Hope is working hard to develop drugs to fight AIDS. Under a \$2 million, three-year grant from the National Institute of Allergy & Infectious Diseases, they are engaged in a four-pronged effort to develop effective therapies. City of Hope provides important facilities for AIDS patients. They also offer education, a series of classes designed for health care professionals, workshops in which nursing home extended care facilities or home health agencies.

In an effort to help the City of Hope's good work, thousands of Americans will be united symbolically in a thousand "Workout for Hope" physical fitness extravaganza to be held in thousands of cities across the country.

We in Detroit are delighted to be staging "Workout for Hope" again this year. Last year, more than 30 top fitness professionals and their clubs helped to make our Detroit event number two in the nation. We raised close to \$40,000.

This year's event will be even more spectacular. It will be at the Fairlane Manor in Dearborn. Registration will be from 7-9 a.m. and Events will be held from 9 a.m.-noon. Saturday, April 6. If you have any questions, call Patricia Reilly at 443-2250.

Now, just in case you can't make it, The Workout Company is holding a pre-event celebration. All of our star team leaders will be at our City of Hope for AIDS Marathon. It is sort of an open house party with activities happening for 2 1/2 hours.

We're asking for a minimum donation of \$7. The event starts at 5:30 p.m. Saturday, March 23 from 3:30 p.m. If you have any questions, call 858-1003.

Myrna Partrich, co-owner of The Workout Company, is a member of the Dearborn Township and a member of the City of Hope for AIDS. She is a frequent contributor to the Detroit Free Press and has been a regular columnist for the Detroit Free Press since 1987.

outdoors calendar

IMPORTANT DATES AND EVENTS

• March 21 — Harold Knight of Knight's Hike Game Calls will conduct seminars on turkey and deer calls, 4-8 p.m. at the Sports Authority, 3001 257 Summit Drive, Pontiac.

• March 21-24 — The 1991 Michigan Wildlife Art Festival will be in Stoughton, a Wildlife Market, giving the winning photos of the Outdoor Writers Association of America's Photo Contest, the Federation of Duck Stamp competition, a decoy painting contest and wildlife seminars and lectures will be featured at the Madison Plaza Hotel. The Southfield Pavilion will be filled with the latest exhibition of wildlife art ever assembled in Michigan including work by more than 50 nationally recognized prominent wildlife artists. Call (616) 822-3630 for more information.

• March 22 — Harold Knight of Knight's Hike Game Calls will conduct seminars on turkey and deer calls at the Sports Authority stores in Madison Heights and Livonia. He will speak at the Madison Heights store from 12:30 p.m. and at the Livonia store 1-3 p.m. The seminars are free to the public.

• March 23-24 — Steelheader's Spring Fishing Show will be at the Northern Center Center. Guest speakers include DNR District Fisheries biologist Ron Spitzer, local pro charter fisherman Capt. Steve Jones and more. Admission is \$3 adult, \$1 senior citizen. Children under 12 will be admitted free.

• March 24 — Western Wayne County Conservation Association will hold a 3-D archery shoot at 10 a.m. on its walk-through range in Plymouth Township. Call 453-9843, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily or 425-0887 for more information.

• March 31 — Rabbit season ends statewide.

• March 31 — 1990 fishing licenses expire.

• April 3 — Monthly meeting of the family-oriented Four Seasons Fishing Club will be at the Maplewood Center in Garden City. Call Tony Breher at 477-3816 for more information.

• April 3 — The Livonia-based Four Seasons Fishing Club will hold its monthly general membership meeting beginning at 7:30 p.m. at the Maplewood Center in Garden City. Call Tony Breher at 477-3816 for more information.

• April 3 — A six-week fly-tying class begins at the Riverbend Sportshop in Southfield. Course fee is \$50 and all materials and tools will be furnished. Pre-registration is required. Additional classes begin April 8 and April 23. Call 350-8484 for more information.

• April 6 — Commemorative

Bucks of Michigan will hold its annual Wild Game Dinner at Tom's of Bloomfield. Gourmet wild game burdock and entrees prepared by chef Roman Heinrich Philipp will be featured along with beer, wine, soft drinks, roast beef and chances on hundreds of door prizes. Live and silent auctions will also be held. Proceeds will be used to support CBM, a non-profit corporation founded in 1981 to write and maintain the records of the largest deer, bear, elk and turkey taken in Michigan. For tickets or more information, contact CBM at 3215 Old Farm Lane, Wall Lake, MI 48080, or call (313) 669-4750.

• April 20 — Thirteenth annual River Crab Salmon Stakes fishing tournament, held each spring to raise money for the prevention of

child abuse and child neglect, begins at sunrise at Chuck Muir's River Crab Restaurant in St. Clair. For raffle entry tickets or more information, call the River Crab at (313) 325-2263.

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• April 23 and 25 — A two-day boating safety class begins at 6 p.m. The free course, offered by the Oakland County Sheriff's Department, will be at the Marine Division headquarters, 1700 Brown Road, Auburn Hills west of M-24 and north of the Palace. Call 858-4991 for more information.

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