



exercising options

Myrna Partrich

Trying to work out a problem buttock

Dear Myrna: I have a problem buttock area. My butt is flat and sagging, yet it has plenty of fat. Can I help it with exercise?

Many women share this complaint. Bodies are designed to store fat in these areas, which lose shape quickly. Fortunately, the muscle groups here are also some of the strongest in a woman's body. (I am assuming you are a woman by your handwriting.)

Add the right exercises to your workout and you can have well-developed curves in no time. For example:

- On elbows and knees with a rounded back, leg weights around 2 1/2 pounds are attached to each leg. Extend one leg back, straight lift only a few inches higher than your butt and down to the floor. Control in each direction, working slowly and breathing. Don't use your back (place yourself in front of a mirror) and concentrate on your butt. 5-6 o'clock, four of five sets of eight. When this gets easy, add another leg weight using five pounds.
- Pelvic tilts — on your back, abdominals in tight — squeeze your butt up one inch above the floor. Keep the small of your back on the floor and don't move it. In a rhythmic movement, add variation. Press leg up to ceiling and pump it slowly.

P.S. Don't forget your other areas — abdominals are extremely important to strengthen.

(Myrna Partrich, co-owner of The Workout Company Inc. of Bloomfield Township, is happy to answer any questions readers may have regarding exercise. Please send your letters to: Sports Department, Myrna Partrich, 805 E. Maple, Birmingham, Mich. 48009.)

outdoors calendar

IMPORTANT DATES AND EVENTS

- Through Nov. 16 — Firearms Sighting-In Days are offered at the Western Wayne County Conservation Association, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily. National Rifle Association certified instructors will be on hand and minor gunsmithing services will be available. Call 452-9843 for more information.
- Nov. 1 — Gray and red fox hunting season opens in Zone III.
- Nov. 1 — Mink, muskrat and raccoon trapping season begins in Zone II.
- Nov. 10 — Mink, muskrat and raccoon trapping season begins in Zone III.
- Nov. 11 — Pheasant season ends in Zone II and III.
- Nov. 11 — Quail season ends.
- Nov. 14 — Ruffed and sharp-tail grouse season ends statewide.
- Nov. 15 — Firearm deer season opens statewide.
- Nov. 15 — Bear season reopens in Zone I.

METROPARKS

- Saturday Morning Stuff: Grapevine Crafts, a nature program for children ages 6-10 in which participants will learn to make crafts from a grapevine, will be offered at 10 a.m. Saturday at Stony Creek.
- Nature Sketching, a program in which children ages 8-11 can learn to draw from nature, will be offered at 1 p.m. Saturday at Kensington.
- Tots & Things: Animals Gettin' Ready for Winter, a nature program for children ages 3-5 including songs and a puppet show, will be offered at 11 a.m. Sunday at Stony Creek.
- Feeding Birds at Home, a nature program including a short walk and a discussion on feeding birds that spend the winter in the area, will be offered at 2 p.m. Sunday at Kensington.
- Travels With a Naturalist, a slide program featuring The Badlands of Theodore Roosevelt National Park, will be shown at 1 p.m. Tuesday at Stony Creek.
- Snowshoe Tying Workshop, a five-hour workshop in which participants will learn to tie their own snowshoes, will be offered at 10 a.m. Saturday, Nov. 11, at Indian Springs. There is a \$45 charge for a snowshoe kit and a \$22 charge for bindings. Participants should bring a snack and a knife.
- Bird Nests and Bare Branches, a naturalist-led walk challenging participants to find bird nests from seasons past, will be offered at 1 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 11, at Stony Creek.
- Nature Stories for 5-6 Year Olds, an opportunity for children to hear stories about wildlife, will be held at 1 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 11, at Kensington.
- Basketry for Beginners, a program in which participants will learn the basics of basketweaving, will be offered at 1 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 12, at Indian Springs. There is a \$7 charge for material and participants should bring scissors, clippers, clothepins, a tape measure and a knitting needle.
- Holiday Crafts, a continuous demonstration of several easy-to-do crafts for the holidays will be held at 2 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 12, at Kensington.
- Full Moon Walk, an evening hike in search of nocturnal animals, will be held at 7 p.m. Monday, Nov. 13, at Kensington and Stony Creek.

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Castle stalks black leopard

THERE IS NO camouflage jeep sitting in the driveway and no hi-tech, ultra violet tracking devices stashed in the corner of the basement. But inside the home in this affluent Birmingham neighborhood lurks a man on the prowl.

John Castle is that man. And he's stalking Michigan's phantom feline: the black leopard.

To some, Castle is little more than a ghost buster. Many people are convinced the reports of sightings of a large panther-like cat are merely from confused individuals who have seen either a black Labrador, a coyote, a feral house cat or a fisher. They remain convinced, in their own minds, that there is no large-cat population in Michigan.

But to hundreds of other reputable people who claim to have seen a large, black, panther-like cat, Castle is their only link to the bottom of this unsolved mystery.

"I've seen enough reports that I'm convinced we have a small population of breeding black leopards in Michigan," Castle said.

IF ANYONE has an inside track on the existence of a black leopard population in Michigan, Castle does. He has been studying and following up on the reported sightings for 36 years. Since 1980, Castle has been stalking the cats full-time and has traveled thousands of miles and spent thousands of hours investigating the reports.

Castle received his first report of



outdoors

Bill Parker

a panther sighting in 1953 while serving as the city editor of the Pontiac Press (now the Oakland Press).

Although intrigued by the idea, Castle decided the sighting was probably that of a cougar under poor lighting conditions. He assumed the cat was probably an escaped pet.

More recently however, there have been a rash of sightings, centered around a number of reports from Michigan's southern Lower Peninsula, which began in 1984.

At that time, Castle had recently retired from an executive speechwriting position at General Motors and had the time to spend to seriously investigate the reports.

"In the early '80s I got the drive to get to the bottom of this mystery," said Castle. "I was a newspaperman, so naturally I was skeptical. But the more I've gotten into it, the less skeptical I've become."

ALTHOUGH NO panther, leopard or cougar has yet been caught, killed or otherwise positively identified in Michigan, Castle has gathered enough physical evidence to raise the eyebrows of even the most ardent skeptic.



BILL DRESSLER/staff photographer

John Castle believes there is a small population of black leopards residing in Michigan.

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of panther sightings. Some casts leave unanswered questions as to what type of creature actually left the print, but other tracks were undoubtedly left by a large member of the feline family.

Although Castle has concentrated his efforts in Michigan, he has ventured throughout the nation in his pursuit. He has polled every regional wildlife office in the United States and Canada.

"My survey did yield an eye-opening statistic," Castle said. "Twenty-nine states and five Canadian provinces have received black panther reports in the past 10 years. Sightings number in the thousands. Where there are that many tales, there must be panthers."

CASTLE'S BIGGEST problem is authenticating the existence of these cats.

"If people see something, they know what they see so they are concerned with finding the fresh tracks and making a mold or getting a good picture," said Castle. "People have to understand that if they see something, they must find the trail immediately. They can't wait until tomorrow or all kinds of animals can come through the area and they may never find the correct set of tracks."

Even with tracks and pictures, many people will doubt the existence of black leopards in Michigan.

"The best way to authenticate their existence is to put one up a tree, tranquilize it and cage it," Castle said. "Or if one was killed, either by a hunter or a car, but I don't advocate that and I would hate to see it."

For now, Castle will continue his hunt with hopes of someday hitting the jackpot. But he knows the mystery could go on for years. "They have been called the feline flying saucers," admitted Castle. "But I've got so many credible reports, I just can't ignore it."

Castle can be reached at 646-0233 or by writing to him at 1909 Latham, Birmingham, 48009.

(Bill Parker is happy to answer questions readers may have regarding the outdoors. Hunters are also urged to report their success. Send your question or comments to: Outdoors, 805 E. Maple, Birmingham 48009.)

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