

Turkey season should be good one in Michigan

OUTDOOR INSIGHTS



BILL PARKER

time to get out and celebrate the arrival of spring.

The popularity of Michigan's spring turkey season has never been higher as upwards of 11,000 hunters applied for a permit this year.

"It looks like it will be another good season, weather permitting," DNR upland gamebird specialist Al Stewart said. "There are 135,000 birds out there so the numbers are good. It's a pretty exciting time for

turkey enthusiasts and turkey hunters.

"Last year was an excellent production year with very high production. Overall, the winter was fairly mild, too, so they came through it pretty good."

Hunters who failed to receive a permit for their desired hunt period can still participate in the season through the experimental fourth hunt period, May 18-31. While many feel the experimental hunt is held too late in the spring for hunters to be successful I've got news to the contrary. The late season can be as productive as the early hunt.

"Hunter success during the late hunt is around 22 percent while hunter success during the rest of the season runs at about 26 percent," Stewart said. "That tells me the difference is basically user error. If there was 10 or 20 percent decrease in hunter success, then maybe the opportunity would be different but that's not the case. A lot of hunters are

having success in the late hunt."

And why not? By then most of the hens have come to roost, but the Toms are still hot to trot, which makes them susceptible to being called.

If you didn't get the permit you wanted take a chance and get out during the late hunt. I've hunted that season twice and taken two nice, mature Toms.

Trout season on tap

If fishing is more your cup of tea this is the weekend you've undoubtedly been awaiting as the 1999 trout season opens Saturday on designated trout lakes and streams across the state.

From the Big Two Hearted and the Tobacco in the Upper Peninsula to the fabled "Holy Waters" of the AuSable, the Detroit, the Flotte, and the Pore Marquette in the northern Lower Peninsula, Michigan's trout streams, big and small, will be bursting with anglers. Even local streams such as the

Huron River, Paint Creek, the Johnson Draw and Kearsley Creek will be loaded with anglers.

Northern Michigan's fabled trout streams offer favorable conditions for natural reproduction, which accounts for the greatly fluctuating water temperatures from summer to winter. There is limited year-to-year carry over in some of southern Michigan's streams - which accounts for the occasional 15- to 20-inch fish caught down here each year - but not enough to sustain a viable fishery. Thanks to an aggressive stocking program by the Michigan DNR, trout anglers in southeastern Michigan don't have far to go to enjoy the thrill of bringing a feisty trout to the net.

Inland lake anglers will be busy this weekend, too, as pike, walleye and musky seasons open Saturday. Walleye anglers will be out in force on such lakes as

Union, Kent, Cass and Belleville while pike anglers will seek their prey on Orchard, Union, Lake Sixteen and Lakeville lakes among others.

Salmon Stakes reminder

It's not too late to get tickets for the River Crab Salmon Stakes. Slated for Saturday, the annual fishing tournament/raffle is based at the River Crab Restaurant in St. Clair and raises money to benefit programs that help troubled children, adults and their families statewide.

Money is raised through the sale of \$10 raffle/entry tickets. Raffle prizes include a trip for two adults and two children to Mackinac Island, use of a private suite for a Detroit Tigers baseball game, a weekend for two in Chicago, \$500 in gift certificates to Chuck Muer restaurants, and a liquor and dinner for two at a Chuck Muer restaurant.

There are also cash stipends

for the anglers, boats and clubs who catch the biggest salmon and trout.

On top of all this, all ticket purchasers are winners since ticket stubs are good for \$10 off dinner for two or Sunday brunch at participating Chuck Muer restaurants.

Tickets are available at Charley's Crab in Troy, Meriweather's in Southfield, Muer's Sea Food Tavern in West Bloomfield, Big Fish in Dearborn, Big Fish Too in Madison Heights, Gandy Dancer in Ann Arbor, or by calling the River Crab at 1-800-468-3727.

Anglers and hunters are urged to report your success. Questions and comments are also encouraged. Send information to: Outdoors, 805 E. Maple, Birmingham, MI 48009. Fax information to (248) 644-1314, send e-mail to bparker@oe.homescomm.net or call Bill Parker evenings at (248) 901-2573.)

OUTDOOR CALENDAR

FUND-RAISERS

TO BANQUET

The Paul H. Young Chapter of Trout Unlimited is holding its 35th annual fund-raising banquet on Thursday, April 22, at the Royal House in Warren. Tickets are \$40 per person and \$75 for couples. The event includes a prime rib or broiled whitefish dinner, raffles, auctions, door prizes and more. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. and dinner will be served at 7:30 p.m. For tickets and more information, call (248) 594-8283.

SEMINARS

SPRING BREAK FOR BICYCLING

Learn the basics of body mechanics, bicycle mechanics and bicycle touring during this class, which is sponsored by Working Wheelers Cycling Club and begins at 7 p.m. Wednesday, April 28, at Eastern Mountain Sports in Farmington Hills. Space is limited and the registration deadline is Saturday, April 24. Call (481) 553-7764 for more information.

BOATING SAFETY

Members of the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary will be on hand to explain boating safety and what they look for during a boat inspection, during the regular meeting of the Metro West Steelheaders, 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, May 4, in the cafeteria at Garden City High School. Call Dominic Liparoto at (248) 476-5027 for more information.

WOMEN'S FLY FISHING

River Bend Sports Shop in Southfield is sponsoring a Women's Fly Fishing School on Sunday, May 23. Participants will spend a fun-filled day learning the basics of fly fishing including lessons in casting, knot tying, reading the water, playing, landing and releasing fish, entomology and fly selection and more. Cost is \$125 per person and class size is limited. Call Pat Rofe at (248) 350-8484 for more information and to register.

FLY FISHING SCHOOL

The Riverbend Sports Shop in Southfield is sponsoring several fly fishing schools in the upcoming months. Held at the Huntsman Hunt Club in Dryden and Hunters Creek Hunt Club in Metamora, the schools include lessons in basic fly fishing techniques including casting, knot tying, reading the water, playing, landing and releasing fish, entomology and fly selection and more. Classes are scheduled for April 25, May 8 and 16, June 6 and 19, July 11 and 26, Aug. 16 and 29, and Sept. 12. Class size is limited. Call (248) 350-8484 or (248) 591-3474 to register and for more information.

MOUNTAIN BIKING

Join author Mike Terrell and learn where to go mountain biking in the northern Lower Peninsula during this class, which begins 7 p.m. Wednesday, April 28, at REI in Northville. Call (248) 347-2100 for information.

FLY TYING

Paint Creek Outfitters in Rochester offers a variety of fly tying classes for beginners and advanced tiers. Call (248) 650-0440 for more information or to make a reservation for an upcoming class.

MORE FLY TYING

River Bend Sports Shop in Southfield offers fly tying classes for beginners, intermediate and advanced tiers. Classes will be held at various times in May, June and July. For more information and to register call (248) 350-8484 or (248) 591-3474.

ACTIVITIES

SEVEN LAKES HIKE

Enjoy a scenic 5-mile hike through the Holly Recreation Area with members of the Southeast Michigan Group, Sierra Club on Saturday, April 24. Participants should meet at 11:30 a.m. behind the Marathon Station at 12 Mile Road and Teton. Call Liz Allingham at (313) 581-7579 for information.

PAINT CREEK HIKE

Take a fast-paced hike over level terrain along the Paint Creek

Trail with members of the Southeast Michigan Group, Sierra Club on Sunday, April 25. Participants should meet at noon behind the Michigan National Bank on 14 Mile Road, east of I-75 (south edge of the Oakland Mall). Call June Cox at (248) 435-9522 for more information.

SEASON/DATES

FREE FISHING

Michigan's annual Free Fishing Weekend will be held June 12-13.

TROUT

Trout season opens April 24 on designated streams, rivers and lakes.

FLIES-ONLY TROUT

A special catch-and-release, flies-only trout season runs through Friday, April 23, on a special section of the Huron River at the Proud Lake Recreation Center. Call (810) 685-2187 for details.

WALLEYE

Walleye season opens April 24 on inland waters of the Lower Peninsula.

SAUGER

Sauger season opens Saturday, April 24, on inland waters of the Lower Peninsula.

MUSKY

Musky season opens Saturday, April 24, on inland waters of the Lower Peninsula.

PIKE

Northern pike season opens Saturday, April 24, on inland waters of the Lower Peninsula.

CLUBS

FLY TYING

The River Bend Sports Shop Fly Tying Club meets every other week in Southfield. Call (248) 350-8484 or (248) 591-3474 for more information.

CLINTON VALLEY BASS

Clinton Valley Bass Anglers club is seeking new members (boaters and non-boaters are welcome). The club meets monthly at Gander Mountain in Waterford. Call

Mike Daly at (248) 666-8910 for more information.

METRO-WEST STEELHEADERS

Metro-West Steelheaders meets at 7:30 p.m. on the first Tuesday of each month in the cafeteria at Garden City High School. Call Dominic Liparoto at (248) 476-5027 for more information.

MICHIGAN FLY FISHING

The Michigan Fly Fishing Club meets at 7 p.m. the first and third Wednesdays of each month at Livonia Clarenceville Junior High School. Call (810) 478-1494 for more information.

FOUR SEASONS

The Four Seasons Fishing Club meets 7:30-9:30 p.m. the first Wednesday of each month at the Civic Park Senior Center, 16218 Farmington Road, in Livonia. Visitors are invited and refreshments will be served. Call Jim Kudej at (734) 591-0843 for more information.

SOLAR

The School for Outdoor Leadership, Adventure and Recreation (SOLAR), a non-profit organization interested in promoting the appreciation of outdoor activities, meets at 7:30 p.m. on the first Tuesday of each month at the Colony Hall in Southfield. Call (248) 988-6658.

METROPARKS

METROPARK REQUIREMENTS

Most Metropark programs are free while some require a nominal fee. Advanced registration and a motor vehicle permit are

required for all programs. Call the respective parks toll free at the following numbers: Stony Creek, (800) 477-7766; Indian Springs, (800) 477-3182; Kensington, (800) 477-3178.

SPRING CLEANUP

Spring cleanup days are scheduled for Saturday, April 24, at Lake Erie, (800) 477-3189, and Kensington, (800) 477-3178. Most programs last one-half day and lunch is provided for all volunteers who register in advance.

WACKY WOODCOCK

An indoor discussion followed by an outdoor observation session of the woodcock's aerial mating display begins at 8:30 p.m. Friday at Indian Springs.

AMPHIBIAN ORGY

Learn all about frogs in the springtime during this program, which begins at 1:30 p.m. Saturday at Kensington.

STICKS AND STONES

A naturalist-led hike focusing on the needs of many animals begins at 2 p.m. Sunday at Kensington.

1999 PERMITS

The 1999 Huron-Clinton Metroparks annual vehicle entry permits and boat launching permits are on sale at all Metropark offices. Vehicle entry permits are \$15 (\$8 for senior citizens). The annual boat launching permits are \$18 (\$9 for senior citizens). Call (800) 47-PARKS for more information.

COUNTY PARKS

COUNTY PARK REQUIREMENTS

Advanced registration is required for all nature programs at Oakland County Parks. Call (810) 625-6473 to register or for more information.

EARTH HIKE

Discover endangered species and learn what you can do to help, then lace up your boots and hike the trails of Independence Oaks during this program, which begins at 1:30 p.m. Saturday, April 24, at Independence Oaks.

STATE PARKS

STATE PARK REQUIREMENTS

Maybury State Park, Proud Lake Recreation Area, Bald Mountain Recreation Area, Highland Recreation Area, and Island Lake Recreation Area offer nature interpretive programs throughout the year. A state park motor vehicle permit is required for entry into all state parks and state recreation areas. For registration and additional information on the programs at Maybury call (810) 349-8390. For programs at Bald Mountain, call (810) 693-6767. For programs at Proud Lake and Highland, call (810) 658-2187. For programs at Island Lake, call (810) 229-7067.

EARTH DAY CELEBRATION

Celebrate Earth Day through earth-related programs and displays during this program, which begins at 11 a.m. Saturday, April 24, at Maybury.

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