

OUTDOOR CALENDAR

CLASSES

FLY FISHING SCHOOL
The Riverbend Sports Shop in Southfield is sponsoring several fly fishing schools in the upcoming months. Held at the Huron-Hunter Creek 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 June 19, July 11 and 25, August 16 and 29, and Sept. 12. Class size is limited. To register and for more information call (248) 350-8484 or (248) 591-3474.

GREAT U.S. HIKES
Learn the history of the Appalachian Trail, how to prepare for a long backpacking trip, trail safety, hiking tips and more during this program, which begins at 7 p.m. Wednesday, June 23, at REI in Northville. For more information call (248) 347-2100.

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

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

CLIMBING CLASS
An introductory climbing course for the novice and first-time climber is offered at various times at REI in Northville. The class covers basic indoor climbing safety, technique, equipment and terminology. The course is free and available to adults and children. Call (248) 347-2100 for current schedules.

TOURNAMENTS

THUSA FISHING DERBY
Ted Nugent United Sportsmen of America is hosting a Youth Fishing Derby beginning at 9 a.m. Saturday, June 19, at Independence Oaks County Park in Clarkston. The derby is open to anglers age 16 and under and there is a \$3 registration fee. For more information contact Jeff Morren at (248) 373-1521 or Marvin Aronowski at (248) 969-0962, or send e-mail to enjoyameritech.

MOTOR CITY CHARITY
The 13th annual Motor City Charity Bass Classic will be held Saturday, June 19, on Lake St. Clair. The tournament is hosted by Lake St. Clair Bass Anglers to raise money for ARC Services of Macomb. Entry fee is \$160. For more information call Dave Hargrave at (810) 469-1600.

ST. CLAIR OPEN
The Backlashers Bass Club will hold its 12th annual Lake St. Clair Open two-person bass tournament beginning at 6 a.m. Saturday, June 19. Team entry fee is \$80 if paid by May 20, \$90 at the boat launch. To register and for more information call Roger Haylip at (734) 753-5341, Steve Taraszkiewicz at (313) 638-1202

or Jeff Mangrum at (313) 937-2190.

KENT LAKE OPEN
Clinton Valley Bass Anglers will hold its sixth annual Kent Lake Open, a two-man team tournament, beginning at 6 a.m. Sunday, June 20, on Kent Lake. Entry fee is \$100 per team and only cash will be accepted at the launch. To pre-register and for more information call Kevin Dyer at (248) 673-4676.

OKLAHOMA BASS MASTERS
Oklahoma Bass Masters will hold a two-man team open tournament beginning at 6:30 a.m. Sunday, June 27, on Lake St. Clair. Entry fee is \$80 per boat and there will be a \$5 late charge for entries received after June 23. To register and for more information call Roy Randolph at (248) 542-5254. Oklahoma Bass Masters will hold additional tournaments July 18 on L.S. Clair, Aug. 8 on Orchard Lake, Aug. 29 on Lobdell Lake, and Sept. 26 on Lakeville Lake.

ACTIVITIES

LAKEVILLE SANCTUARY
Join members of the Michigan Nature Association on a hike through the Lakeville Nature Sanctuary during this trip, which begins at 2:30 p.m. Saturday, June 26, in Lakeville (north of Rochester). For directions to the Lakeville Nature Sanctuary or additional information call Fred Dye at (248) 376-2955.

PROUD LAKE HIKE
Join members of the Southeast Michigan Group, Sierra Club on a hike through the Proud Lake State Recreation Area on Sunday, June 20. Participants are asked to meet at 8:30 a.m. behind the Marathon Station at the corner of Telegraph and 12 Mile Road. For information call Joanne Spatz at (248) 932-5370.

SEASON/DATES

BASS SEASON
Bass season opens Saturday, June 19, on Lake St. Clair and the St. Clair and Detroit rivers.

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.

CAMPFIRE AND CANOE
Ages five and older can bring their fathers and explore some outdoor lore, learn back to basics skills like knot tying and paddle around Crooked Lake during this program, which begins at 7 p.m. Saturday, June 19, at Independence Oaks.

SUMMER SAUNTER
Take a leisurely walk to enjoy the sights and sounds of the season during this program, which begins at 1:30 p.m. Saturday, June 26, at Independence Oaks.

STATE PARKS

STATE PARK REQUIREMENTS
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 pro-

grams at Maybury call (810) 340-8390. For programs at Bald Mountain call (810) 693-6767. For programs at Proud Lake and Highland call (810) 695-2187. For programs at Island Lake call (810) 229-7067.

BEGINNING BIRDING
A naturalist-led walk in search of birds begins at 9 a.m. Saturday, June 19, at Proud Lake.

EXPLORING THE FOREST
Learn about the forest and their inhabitants during this guided hike for children and their families, which begins at 1 a.m. Saturday, June 19, at Maybury.

FROGS AND TOADS
Learn all about frogs and toads through a slide show and a short walk during this program, which begins at 1 p.m. Saturday, June 19, at Proud Lake.

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, 1-800-477-7756; Indian Springs, 1-800-477-3192; Kensington, 1-800-477-7318.

STORIES IN THE SAND
Children ages five to seven are invited to attend a story session followed by a related fun activity during this program at 1 p.m. Friday, June 18, at Stony Creek.

FRIDAY NIGHT CANOE
Help paddle the 34-foot Voyageur Canoe and learn about the Great Lakes fur trade during this program at 8 p.m. Friday, June 18, at Stony Creek.

ALIENS
Learn about "alien" wildflowers and other travelers during this naturalist-led walk at 10 a.m. June 19, at Kensington.

SCAVENGER HUNT
The whole family can treat Dad to a fun time in pursuit of Father's Day trivia, then return to the Nature Center for a hot dog roast during this program at 1 p.m. Sunday, June 20, at Stony Creek.

ANIMAL SPOTTING
Bring Dad out to the park and go animal spotting with an interpreter during this program at 2 p.m. June 20, at Kensington.

CREEPLY CRAWLIES
Children ages four and five can learn about the world of spiders and insects during this program, which begins at 10 a.m. Tuesday, June 22, at Kensington.

INDIAN CHILDREN
Children ages six and seven will discover how American Indian children learned about their world without going to school during this program at 10 a.m. June 23, at Kensington.

BUG BUDDIES
Children ages eight to 10 will chase bugs and learn about bugs during this program at 10 a.m. June 23, at Kensington.

1999 PERMITS
The 1999 Huron-Clinton Metroparks annual vehicle entry permits and boat launching permits are on sale at all Metroparks offices. Vehicle entry permits are \$15 (\$8 for senior citizens). The annual boat launching permits are \$18 (\$9 for senior citizens). Call 1-800-47-PARKS.

Tawas — It's up north, but not that far away

OUTDOOR INSIGHTS



BILL PARKER

Consider a trip "up north" and images of forested woodlands, sun-drenched lakes and rolling rivers come to mind. Outdoor activities like canoeing, hiking, camping, hunting and fishing are synonymous with that place we fondly refer to as "up north."

Unfortunately, so is a long, tiresome drive. Seems anywhere worth visiting is four or five hours away, or more.

Last weekend I rediscovered a spot in the state that now adorns the top of my list of possible vacation destinations. And it's only a three-hour drive from the heart of Observer & Eccentricland.

The Tawasess — Tawas City and East Tawas — rest on Michigan's sunrise coast just north of Saginaw Bay. Lake Huron provides fabulous fishing and miles of open water for boating, while the Huron National Forest and the AuSable River Valley provide plenty of opportunity for inland outdoor adventures.

The Michigan Outdoor Writers Association held its summer meeting in Tawas City, and I was afforded the chance to explore the surrounding countryside. What I found was an abundance of enjoyable opportunities.

Opportunities abound
Hikers can trek along the shore of Lake Huron on the Sandy Hook Nature Trail at Tawas Point State Park. Tawas Point, which features a sand dune ecosystem, is a major stop for songbirds migrating along the Mississippi Flyway.

A short 20 minute drive from Tawas City will bring you to the bank of Michigan's premiere blue ribbon trout stream, the mighty AuSable River. Hikers can journey along the Highbanks

Trail through the picturesque AuSable River Valley, or take shorter trips to the Lumberman's Memorial Monument, a tribute to Michigan's lumbering past, Largo Springs, which features a small waterfall, a boardwalk and three wildlife observation decks, or the Canoeing Monument and Eagle's Nest.

Despite the low water levels across the state, canoeers and kayakers will find ample water in the AuSable as well as in Tawas Bay.

Fantastic fishing

Anglers have a variety of opportunity in the Tawas area. Lake Huron offers tremendous salmon, brown trout, lake trout and steelhead fishing and Tawas Bay serves up great action for walleye anglers. Perch fishing has been slow in recent years, but started picking up a little bit last summer.

The AuSable provides great river fishing for trout, walleye and bass and the river impoundments — above Cooke Dam and above Foote Dam — serve up quality inland lake fishing opportunities.

I had the fortune of joining fellow scribes Dave Graham, Dick Braden, Herb Boldt (formerly of Livonia), Tom Carney and Den-

nis Knickerbocker on a fishing trip on the Cooke Dam impoundment.

At 1,942 acres the impoundment is a huge body of water. It is part of the main stream of the AuSable and is littered with structure in the form of submerged logs and trees, weed beds and steep drops. The lake features a smorgasbord of game fish. We caught walleye, smallmouth bass, largemouth bass, pike, (slab) blue gill, rock bass, sunfish and perch. While kicking back in Graham's 1951 wooden Criss Craft Runabout I felt like I'd taken a trip back in time. Fishing was outstanding and the lake was relatively void of other boaters and lakeshore residences.

If you're looking for a summer getaway consider the Tawasess. Contact the Tawas Area Chamber of Commerce at 1-800-55-TAWAS for assistance with lodging, camping and other accommodations.

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

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Observer & Eccentric
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One entry will be chosen to receive four press passes to cover the game, an interview with a Detroit Shock player and the article will be published in a future issue. Five family four packs will be given as secondary prizes. All entries must be received by June 13, 1999. Winners will be notified by June 14, 1999. No purchase necessary. Employees of the Observer & Eccentric and Palace Sports & Entertainment and immediate family members are not eligible.

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