

Hunters will reap pheasant harvest

OUTDOOR EVENTS



BILL PARKER

The frantic rooster flushed swiftly and with a thunderous roar. Started and caught totally by surprise, I dumbfoundly raised my 12 gauge and tried to draw a bead but it wasn't to be. Not this time.

As if to bid me adieu, the mature cockbird c-c-ked twice as he winged swiftly to my right, sailed through a sparse, leafless tree line then disappeared into the golden standing corn on the other side of a fence - a fence I didn't have permission to cross.

Moments like this one seem to stick with me longer than those of shots I've made, or missed for that matter. Something about the element of surprise I suppose, and the fact that the round went to the rooster, etch the moment more vividly in my memory.

Pheasant season opened Wednesday and runs through Nov. 14 in the Lower Peninsula. The season in the Upper Peninsula was Oct. 10-20. The daily bag across the state is two roosters. The possession limit is four, the season limit eight.

While today's statewide flock is nothing close to what it resembled in the heydays of the 1950s and 60s, when hunters annually harvested 500,000 birds, it still presents a great opportunity for Michigan's 100,000-plus bird hunters.

A mild winter, coupled with a dry spring hatching season should result in a slight increase in the flock over last year. Michi-

gan hunters annually shoot around 120,000 birds between the regular season and late December season.

While ringnecks are scattered across the state the heaviest concentrations are found throughout the south-central counties in the Lower Peninsula and in the Thumb region. The agriculturally rich counties of Hillsdale, Lenawee, Jackson, Washtenaw, Branch, Clinton and Shiawassee are traditional hot spots. Up in the Thumb, check farmland in Sanilac, Tuscola and Huron counties.

Much like southern Michigan's whitetail population, the vast majority of ringnecks is found hunkered down on private land. The good news is that it's often easier to gain access to private land to hunt pheasants than it is to gain access to hunt deer. For one thing, a pheasant hunt will usually only take a couple hours, compared to days, weeks even months of deer hunting. Another possible reason is that most rural property owners in southern Michigan are besieged with deer hunters seeking permission to hunt while the number of pheasant hunters looking for an open field is considerably less.

If you do gain access remember to offer to share your harvest with the landowner. A little appreciation and common courtesy will go a long way in keeping the door open for a return trip in the future.

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 or call Bill Parker evenings at (248) 901-2573.*

SEASON/DATES

BEAR
Bear season runs through Oct. 26 by special permit in designated areas of the state.

DEER
Archery season runs through Nov. 14 and Dec. 1-Jan. 2, statewide. An early antlerless-only firearms season will be held Oct. 16-25 on private land in Deer Management Unit 452. A late antlerless-only season will be held Dec. 18-Jan. 2 on private and public land in DMU 452. A late antlerless-only season will also be held Dec. 18-Jan. 2 on most private land in the Lower Peninsula. Muzzleloading season runs Dec. 3-12 in the Upper Peninsula and Dec. 10-19 in the lower peninsula.

DUCK
Duck season runs Oct. 2-Nov. 30 in the North and Middle zones and Oct. 9-Dec. 7 in the South Zone.

ELK
Late elk season runs Dec. 7-14 by special permit in limited areas of the northern lower peninsula.

GROUSE
The regular grouse season runs through Nov. 14 statewide. A special late season runs Dec. 1-Jan. 1 in the Lower Peninsula.

PHASEANT
Pheasant season runs Oct. 10-20 in the Upper Peninsula and Oct. 20-Nov. 14 in the Lower Peninsula. A special late season runs Dec. 1-16 in much of the south-eastern part of the state.

RABBIT
Rabbit season runs through March 31 statewide.

SQUIRREL
Squirrel season runs through Jan. 1 statewide.

TURKEY
The fall wild turkey season runs Oct. 4-Nov. 9 by special permit in designated areas of the state.

OUTDOOR CALENDAR

WOODCOCK
Woodcock season runs through Nov. 8 statewide.

CLASS/CLINIC

ROCK CLIMBING 102
The second of a two-part clinic on rock and ice climbing begins at 7 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 27, at REI in Northville. Call (248) 447-2100 for more information.

SNOWMOBILE SAFETY
A Snowmobile Safety Certification Class begins at 8:30 a.m. Saturday, Nov. 6, at the Novi Expo Center. Class is open to persons of all ages. Children must be 12 by March 31, 2000. Cost is \$5 and registration begins Oct. 25. To register call (248) 681-7423.

FLY TYING
Hook Line & Sinker bait shop in Lake Orion will hold fly tying classes every Wednesday and Thursday until the beginning of ice fishing season. Call (248) 814-9216 for information.

ROD BUILDING
Hook Line & Sinker bait shop in Lake Orion will hold fishing rod building classes every Wednesday and Thursday until the beginning of ice fishing season. Call (248) 814-9216.

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 and information.

ACTIVITIES

HOLIDAY NATURE PRESERVE
Join members of the Southeast Michigan Group, Sierra Club on a morning walk at the Holiday Nature Preserve. Participants

can meet at 8:30 a.m. Sunday, Oct. 24, in the parking lot behind Oil Dispatch at the southwest corner of Middlebelt and I-96. Call Bob Duda at (734) 464-0076 for information.

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 programs at Maybury call (810) 349-8390. For programs at Bald Mountain call (810) 693-6767. For programs at Fossil Lake and Highland call (810) 685-2157. For programs at Island Lake call (810) 229-7067.

HORSE-DRAWN HAY RIDES
Horse-drawn hay rides will be offered 1-4 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays through the end of October at Maybury.

HAUNTED FOREST WALK
Join a hair-raising walk through the haunted forest Oct. 22-23 at Maybury.

HALLOWEEN CAMPFIRE
Join a western style family fun including trick-or-treating, pumpkin carving contest, campsite decorations and more Oct. 22-24 at Metamora-Hadley.

HALLOWEEN WEEKEND
A frightfully fun-filled weekend of scary stories, pumpkin carving, trick-or-treating and more will be held Oct. 22-24 at Pontiac 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, 1-800-477-7766; Indian Springs, 1-800-477-3182; Ken-

ington, 1-800-477-3178; Hudson Mills, 1-800-477-3191.

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 (\$3 for senior citizens). The annual boat launching permits are \$18 (\$9 for senior citizens). Call 1-800-47-PARKS.

CIDER PRESS YOUR OWN
Use the nature center's press to make your own apple cider on Sundays through Oct. 24 at Stony Creek.

FULL MOON WALK
Learn about moon folklore while enjoying an evening stroll under the light of the Ojibway "Moon of the Falling Leaves" during this p.m. Sunday, Oct. 24, at Stony Creek.

NATURE'S NUGGETS
A guided hike to explore autumn and learn about nature's goodies, which sustain wildlife through the winter months, at 10:30 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 23, at Kensington.

DEER RUN RAMBLE
A relaxing, guided walk along one of the longer trails in the nature area begins at 1:30 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 24, at Kensington.

OAKLAND 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.

FRIENDS OF FEATHERS
Join the nature center's new club for ages 8-12. Each meeting includes indoor and outdoor nature activities. Cost is \$4 and advanced registration is required. The next meetings will be 10:30 a.m. to noon, Saturday, Oct. 23, and Saturday, Nov. 27, at Independence Oaks.



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ASSOCIATIONS
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Oakland Youth Orchestra www.oymf.com
Society of Automotive Engineers-East www.sae-detroit.org
Suburban Newspapers of America www.suburbannews.com
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Redford Chamber of Commerce <http://redfordchamber.org>

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