Picture Yourself in Winnebago County Parks

WCP NEWS

Volume 3 November 2015

WINNEBAGO COUNTY PARKS DEPARTMENT
MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

GIVE THANKS FOR WISCONSIN'S WILD TURKEYS

Wild turkeys were once native to parts of Wisconsin, in an area roughly south of a lie from Prairie du Chien to Green Bay. They were an important food source for settlers and Indians alike, and the Cheyenne Indians were called "the striped arrow people' because they feathered their arrows with barred wing feathers of wild turkeys. By about 1881, wild turkeys had all but disappeared from Wisconsin. Settlement and the expansion of agriculture and logging led to the clearing of the state's oak forests, and the introduction of domestic fowl spread disease thru wild turkey populations. Unregulated hunting also took its toll, and the last recorded wild turkey sighting in Wisconsin was near Darlington in Lafayette County in 1881.

With the recent recurrence of second growth oak in parts of the state, some areas have become suitable turkey habitat again. Today the DNR is stocking 100% wild-trapped turkeys from Missouri, and these transplanted wild birds are reproducing and have reestablished a self-sustaining wild turkey population in Wisconsin. The state's wild turkey population is currently about 20,000, primarily concentrated in the southwest area. As populations reach 10 turkeys per square mile, the various management units are capable of supporting hunting. Currently, the spring gobbler hunt is restricted to a small area and hunters are limited by special permits. The DNR hopes to further expand the state's wild turkey population by obtaining additional wild-trapped turkeys from Missouri and transplanting birds from established flocks here in the state. Transplanting will continue until populations are well established in all suitable habitat in the state.

The wild turkey is Wisconsin's largest game bird, and generally is a slender bird with long legs, neck and tail. The average length for males is 48 inches, with females averaging36 inches. Male turkeys (gobblers or tomes) average 18-25 pounds, while the females (hens) average 8-10 pounds.

The body feathers of the turkey are an iridescent bronze, but they appear green, blue, red and even purple in reflected sunlight. The wing and tail feathers are barred with light and dark bands. The gobbler fans out his tail feathers and "struts" for the hens during the mating season. Males appear darker than females because their body feathers are black tipped, while the body feathers on the hens are white or buff tipped.

Hens and gobblers also differ in the number and size of head adornments. On the male, a fleshy growth, called the "wattles", hands from underneath the chin, and growths called "caruncles" are located on the side and back of the neck. The "snood" or dew bill" is a fleshy projection growing above and resting on the nose. Basically bare, the male turkey's head may be colored red, white or blue depending on pigments and circulating blood. During the mating season, while the gobbler is strutting, its head turns bright read, and if he's frightened the head turns pale blue. In hens, the head is usually a pale blue and has more feathers. The most talked about difference between male and female turkeys is the presence of the beard – a bristly mass of modified feathers found on the breast of the mature male. Immature males (jakes) do not normally have an obvious beard until around 2 years of age. Beards are sometimes found on females, however, and multiple beards are occasionally found on both sexes. Gobblers are also equipped with spurs on their legs, much like pheasants, while hens lack well-developed spurs and young turkeys have only small, button-like growths.

Turkeys are wary, shy birds with excellent eyesight. They are capable of flying over 55 miles per hour, but often times prefer to run from predators. The most well known sound of the wild turkey is the tom's rolling gobble. Both sexes make other sounds including yelps, purrs, clucks, and other noises with a variety of meanings. Turkeys are most vocal during the breeding season, similar to the human male at bar closing time, and also at times of distress or alarm. They are identifiable by their large 5-inch tracks, with the three front toes rather thick and the tip of the hind toe leaving an imprint off to one side

FOR MORE INFO:

NWTF Conserve. Hunt. Share.

Wisconsin State Chapter
National Wild Turkey Federation

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Wild turkeys are opportunistic feeders, eating whatever foods are available. During the spring and summer, they feed on insects, berries, green leaves and grass seeds. Often, turkeys feed in fields of alfalfa, searching for insects that are abundant there. Favorite insects include grasshoppers, beetles and ants. Other preferred plant foods are dogwood fruits, wild grape, cherry, sedges, blue grasses, vibernums, blueberry, blackberry, buttercups and violets. During the fall and winter, turkeys feed more on acorns and fruits of trees like oak hop hornbeam, maple, ash, pine and beech, but they will also seek out corn, wheat, oats and other grains in agricultural fields. Hens eat snails and other sources of calcium and minerals to help in egg production, and all turkeys feed heavily in late winter to store up food reserves for the breeding season. Adult gobblers feed very little during the breeding season, relying on the two-pound breast sponge of fat they build up during fall and winter. Turkeys have two daily periods of heavy feeding, at mid-morning and mid-afternoon. Family groups often meet and feed in large flocks, clipping off or ripping vegetation with their beaks or scratching with their feet to uncover food hidden by leaves or snow. Turkeys are always very alert and continually move about while feeding, however, a flock may spend several hours on a few acres if preferred foods are plentiful. After feeding in the morning, turkeys often rest or engage in “dusting”. While dusting, a turkey wallows in loose soil fluffing up its feathers to allow the soil to penetrate to the skin. Favorite dusting places include ant beds, sandy spots and decayed logs.

The wild turkey is primarily a woodland bird, preferring mature or nearly mature hardwood forests. They require large trees that are a dependable food source and provide safe roosting sites some distance from the ground. Favorable habitat for a large wild turkey population consists of a fairly large wooded area that is at least 30%-50% forested. The forest should be primarily oak and other mast bearing trees. Alfalfa and grain fields should cover 10%-25% of the area. Open, grassy areas provide a necessary supply of insects for the young as well as areas for winter feeding, loafing, nesting and strutting, and in addition, turkeys must have access to water.

The daily range of the wild turkey is about two miles. In good habitat, they may cover 400-1,000 acres daily, but home ranges of 8,000 acres or more can be found in poorer habitat. The size of the range depends on food supplies, cover and weather conditions.

Turkeys have many natural predators, most of which prey on eggs and young poults. These predators include skunks, opossums, raccoons, snakes, crows, coyotes, foxes and certain rodents. Bobcats, golden eagles, foxes, great horned owls and red-tailed hawks sometimes take adult turkeys.

The human voice was the first turkey caller, and there are hunters today who use nothing but their voices to call gobblers. Just about anything that cries, squeaks or squawks will call a turkey, but your odds will drastically improve if you master a box call, mouth diaphragm call, slate call, tube call, wingbone call or pushbutton call to name a few. The mouth diaphragm call is considered by many hunters to be the ultimate call. Wild turkeys have their own language and as not one turkey has learned to speak English, we can only guess as to what each sounds means.

EXERPT COURTESY OF: wisconsinhunter.com

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Spotlight On

November 5 & 6 at the Best Western Premier Waterfront Hotel & Oshkosh Convention Center

WI ASSOCIATION OF CONVENTION & VISITOR'S BUREAUS FALL TOURISM CONFERENCE

FOR INFO:

escapetowisconsin.com

Please join the Oshkosh Convention and Visitors Bureau for an inspirational and educational Wisconsin Fall Tourism Conference in Oshkosh November 5 & 6 that will help you punch your ticket to success. General session speakers include Wisconsin native and leadership development guru Jack Harkins and Wisconsin Department of Tourism Secretary Stephanie Klett. There will be breakout sessions on mobile, digital and event marketing, Destination Marketing Association International's Destination-NEXT study, digital trends, craft beer & cheese tourism, and room tax law.

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE:

Thursday 11:00 a.m.—11::00 p.m.

12:00 p.m.—2:00 p.m.—Luncheon & Key Note Speaker WI native and national leadership development guru Jack Harkins.

Breakout Sessions on– Mobil Marketing, Craft Beer & Cheese Tourism, & Event Marketing

Networking, Marketplace/Exhibitor Reception, Dine Around and Afterglow

Friday 7:30 a.m.—12:30 p.m.

Breakfast Buffet

WI Trailblazer Awards Ceremony

Breakout Sessions on—DMAI Destination Workshop, Room Tax Law, Digital Marketing Trends

Closing Session with Speaker Bob Beibel Oshkosh educational leader.

Sponsored in part by the Oshkosh Convention and Visitor's Bureau—visitoshkosh.com or 920-303-9200

Winnebago County Parks, recreation trails, nature preserves, boat launches and Sunnyview Expo Center all play a large part in bringing tourism to Winnebago County.

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EVENT CALENDAR

SUNNYVIEW EXPO CENTER EVENTS

"HAPPY THANKSGIVING"

November 3—Elections

November 7—4H Pizza making

November 9—Poll Worker Training

November 11—Honor Guard Training & OPD Training

November 14—Holiday Wonders Shopping Expo & Craft Fair

November 18—WRC Training

November 26 & 27—closed for Thanksgiving Holiday—NO EVENTS TAKING PLACE

For a complete listing of Sunnyview Expo Center & Parks Department events check our website; www.co.winnebago.wi.us/parks

WINNEBAGO COUNTY COMMUNITY PARK

Shelter restrooms are closed for the season. A port-o-potty will remain in the dog park parking lot throughout the winter season.

The south roadway entrance to the park will close at the end of November.

Parking for the dog park, disc golf, and cross country ski trails is accessible from the Cty. Y entrance, around the round about to the left. Lots are located on both sides of the park roadway.

Once cross county ski trails are groomed information will be available on the Parks info line 920-232-1960 Option #5.

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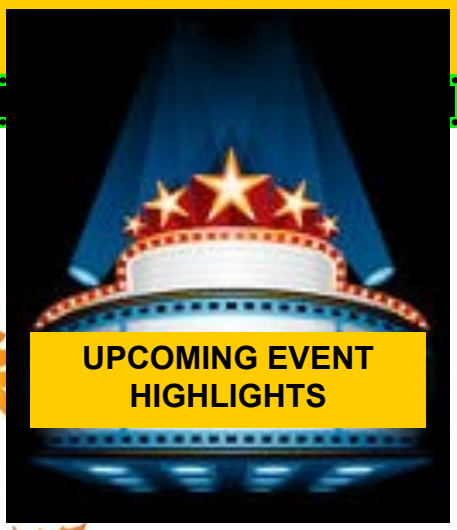
Sunnyview Expo Center's



HOLIDIAY WONDERS SHOPPING EXPO & CRAFT FAIR

November 14, 2015

10:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m.

Info at: www.landkproductions.com

Browse and shop over 75 vendors selling a wide variety of unique and wonderful items. Food is available and donations will be accepted for 'Toys for Tots".

Additional info: Linda Wokosin (800) 366-4189 or linda@landkproductions.com

Picture Yourself in Winnebago County Parks!

Three year ***Winnebago County Boat Launch Parking Permits*** make great gifts! You can purchase a three year permit any time at the parks office . Three year permits purchased now through December 31, 2015 will be good until December 31, 2018. New annual permits are available January 1 for the 2016 calendar year.

Permits are for boat trailer parking at these Winnebago County launches;

Asylum Point Boat Landing — 3400 Sherman Rd., Oshkosh

Grundman/Osh-o-Nee Boat Landing —1801 Grundman Ln., Oshkosh

Black Wolf/Nagy Point Boat Landing —6850 Fond du Lac Rd., Oshkosh

Lake Buttes des Morts Boat Landing —5316 Leonard Pt. Rd., Omro

Eureka Boat Landing—3103 Liberty St., Eureka

Boom Bay Boat Landing—7499 Richter Ln., Larsen

Lake Poygan Boat Landing—8816 Poygan Shores Rd., Winneconne

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SPONSORS CORNER

Vines & Rushes Winery

- **Vines & Rushes**
- **Wine Pairing Dinner**
  Friday, November 6, 2015
- **6:00pm 9:00pm**

Join us for our next wine pairing dinner! Live music will be provided throughout the evening. Our caterers from the Ripon College campus provide an exceptional food experience for our guests and food courses to perfectly pair our wines with.

Appetizer: Baked Pear & Brie Baguette with Cranberry Balsamic Drizzle
Wine: Brianna
Salad: Arugula Salad with Duck Fritters and Cranberry Apple Vinaigrette
Wine: Lead Shot Strawberry Cider
Soup: Cheddar Potato Soup with Chive and Cranberry Garnish
Wine: Frontenac Gris
Entrée: Grilled Marinated Venison or Beef Tenderloin with Cranberry Glaze
Baked Squash with Butter and Brown Sugar
Sauteed Local Vegetables with Cranberries
Wine: Marquette
Dessert: Pumpkin Cream Tarts with Candied Cranberry Sauce
Wine: Sabrevois

Reservations required and can be made at http://vinesandrushes.com/event-signup/
Space is limited.

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What's Up with With…?

SNOWMOBILE SEASON IS JUST AROUND THE NEXT BEND IN THE TRAIL

The Winnebago County Snowmobile Alliance Inc. is getting ready for the snowmobiling season in Winnebago County. The Alliance welcomes snowmobilers to Winnebago County and hopes that visitors enjoy our good food and accommodations during your stay. Please drive safely while taking advantage of the best that winter has to offer in Winnebago County.

Landowners & Snowmobilers have a unique partnership. WI snowmobilers are proud of the statewide trail system that ranks among the best in the nation. This trail system would not be possible without the generosity of the thousands of landowners around the state, which includes hundreds of landowners right here in Winnebago County.

Snowmobile club members work closely with landowners in the placement of the trails. This cooperation results in the promotion of safe, responsible snowmobiling and that benefits everyone. Help keep landowners happy and trail open for future use by: staying off trails until they are officially open, only traveling on marked trails, not cutting corners, and refraining from trespassing.

Winnebago County Snowmobile Alliance Trail maps are available from the Winnebago County Parks Office for a $2.00 donation. All donations go to the Alliance.

Trail opening and closing info is available 24/7 by calling

920-232-1960 Option #4.

To become an Official Trail Ambassador fill out an application on the Winnebago County Parks website.

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THE X FACTS!

Doo—dee—doo—doh- DA!

Sunnyview Expo Center 25th Anniversary

Fun Facts & Features

THE EXPO HAS IT'S OWN PAINT COLORS—yup when staff goes to our paint supplier to purchase paint for our many touch ups all we have to do is say we need 'Expo Blue' or 'Expo Yellow'. Pretty cool huh?

Reminder to Expo Clients—if you do not have a current calendar deposit on file for your 2016 event, please contact the Parks Office as your date could be in jeopardy without a reservation deposit as the new Reservation Policy is now in place.

50 Years of NRPA

Winnebago County Parks Dept.
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www.co.winnebago.wi.us/parks
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