



# The Quiver

Michigan United Conservation Clubs Region 7 Monthly Newsletter  
December 2024 Vol. 41



*We wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year*

## North American Model of Wildlife Conservation

- **Wildlife is public property.** The government holds wildlife in trust for the benefit of all people.
- **Wildlife cannot be slaughtered for commercial use.** This principle eliminates trafficking in game animals.
- **Wildlife is allocated by law.** Every citizen in good standing regardless of wealth, social standing, or land ownership is allowed to participate in the harvest of fish and wildlife within guidelines set by state and federal governments.
- **Wildlife shall be taken by legal and ethical means,** in the spirit of “fair chase” and with good cause. Animals can be killed only for legitimate purposes for food and fur, in self defense, or for protection of property.
- **Wildlife is an international resource.** As such, hunting and fishing shall be managed cooperatively across state, provincial, and national boundaries.
- **Wildlife management, use, and conservation shall be based on sound scientific knowledge and principles.**
- **Hunting, fishing, and trapping shall be democratic.** This gives all persons wealthy and poor, landowner and nonlandowner alike the opportunity to participate.



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## We Need Volunteers By Tyler Mehigh

With the Michigan firearm season fully underway, make sure to mark your calendars for the upcoming Ultimate Sport Show Tour!

MUCC will, once again, be at all three shows in 2025 and WE NEED VOLUNTEERS! We need booth volunteers to help us sell raffle tickets, sign up new members and educate event attendees on the great work MUCC is doing.

**All volunteers will get free entry into the show (for the entire weekend, not just your shift), buy-one get-one free ticket coupons for family/friends, and a gift from MUCC!**

Please see the show dates below and the volunteer sign up link to pick the times you can help.

Ultimate Fishing Show - January 9-12, 2025 - Suburban Collection Showplace, Novi - Sign up [HERE](#)

Outdoorama - February 20-23, 2025 - Suburban Collection Showplace, Novi - Sign up [HERE](#)

Ultimate Sport Show Grand Rapids - March 13-16, 2025 - Devos Place, Grand Rapids - Sign up [HERE](#)



## Youth Camp Update

By Tyler Mehigh

To our clubs who sponsor campers to attend camp each year, the 2025 brochure and annual camp letter will be mailed out to your club representative before the end of the year. All clubs will have the opportunity to sponsor an unlimited number of campers, and we encourage every club to support our program by sending a youth to camp next year.

If you do not have the capacity to find campers to send, but still want to support the Michigan Out-of-Doors Youth Camp, you can contribute to our 2025 'MOOD Youth Camp Scholarship.' We will then find campers for you! If you would like to do this, please reach out to camp director, Shannon, as soon as possible at [sstover@mucc.org](mailto:sstover@mucc.org). We are looking to finalize our scholarship application forms before Thanksgiving.

# World Fisheries Day: Sturgeon Conservation

By Tyler Mehigh November 21, 2024

Today marks World Fisheries Day and there is no better way to honor this day than highlighting the conservation success of Lake Sturgeon in Michigan. Lake Sturgeon are one of the oldest native fish in Michigan which had been brought to near extirpation. However, with conservation efforts combined with our abilities in fisheries, this threatened species has made a comeback.

## History

In the 1800's, Lake Sturgeon were plentiful. These large fish occasionally damaged fishing nets leading to an increase in market demand for this fish's resources to prevent this economic loss. The Lake Sturgeon population declined due to habitat loss and degradation as well as overfishing as recognized by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. By the 1900's, the populations drastically declined with these demands in addition to dams disrupting connectivity for migrating fish. The first thoughts of a statewide rehabilitation strategy for Lake Sturgeon were the first steps toward conservation in 1997 for the Fisheries Division.

Lake Sturgeon conservation efforts often involve streamside rearing facilities to ensure fertilization occurs and juveniles live beyond a critical age. To perpetuate the population, direct capture or egg mats are used to retrieve eggs and are brought back to the rearing facilities. This species is one of the few that migrate upstream for breeding which makes gamete collection easier. The goal of these streamside rearing programs is for the individuals to imprint on the local water to return for future breeding. These facilities are operated by Michigan and Wisconsin DNR with one facility operated by the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians.

Research to further understand this species was an integral part of initiating conservation efforts. Telemetry research aided in understanding the movement of Lake Sturgeon and other behavioral patterns. Additionally, capture-mark-recapture methods were used in Black Lake to determine a safe fishing quota to sustainably harvest the fish.

The conservation successes of Lake Sturgeon have reached the point of anglers being able to harvest an individual based on regulations. As of 2024, anglers are allowed to harvest one sturgeon per person per year and it must be reported within 24 hours. The fishing and possession seasons can be found in the fishing regulations handbook listing specific lakes and rivers along with the size limits. Black Lake in particular has specific regulations regarding reporting possession and prohibiting spear fishing. These limitations on possession and size of various populations are in place to further conserve and ensure there is enough diversity to perpetuate the species.

If a sturgeon is found with a tag, do not remove the tag. Some fish have a visible or internal tag or fin clips, these can be reported to Eyes in the Field when found with data about the fish to the Michigan DNR.

## Characteristics

These unique fish are often described as dinosaur-like due to the rows of bony plates along the body. They hunt on river or lake bottoms using their protrusible mouth on their underside and the barbels as sensory organs. In contrast to many other fishes in Michigan with cycloid scales, Sturgeon have ganoid scales which are stronger. The upper caudal fin is also longer than the lower, similar to a shark. Individuals can range from brown to gray with white bellies.

The Michigan DNR recognizes these fish as late to reach sexual maturity with females taking between 14 and 33 years while males are younger. Spawning is also inconsistent and may not occur annually for an individual, particularly for females. It is estimated females lay between 4,000 and 7,000 eggs per pound of body weight. These long-lived fish live around 55 years with some individuals living beyond 100. The state record weighed 193 pounds caught in Mullett Lake, however, larger have been reported to be observed in the Great Lakes.



**Get Involved**

Organizations like [Sturgeon for Tomorrow](#) are available resources assisting fisheries for Lake Sturgeon rehabilitation. If you want to help in the conservation of important species across Michigan like Lake Sturgeon, consider [joining MUCC](#). We advocate for conservation initiatives with sound, scientific management efforts. Our On the Ground program also works in the field to improve habitat for several species at a time depending on the project.



**Left: An egg mat used for Lake Sturgeon research in the Kalamazoo River. Courtesy of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.**

**Right: Sturgeon Spearing on Black Lake. Courtesy of Michigan Department of Natural Resources.**



Ho Ho Ho

# Prickly Business: North American Porcupine

Logan Schultz • November 14, 2024

If you have ever been outdoors in northern Michigan, you may have encountered the great North American Porcupine (*Erethizon dorsatum*). This critter uses its quills as part of its unique defense system to effectively ward off predators. Some people may be surprised to learn the porcupine can be legally hunted or trapped year-round in Michigan. Whether you hunt or consider yourself a nature-enthusiast, it is best to know about these animals and the associated myths before venturing into their range.

## Myths Debunked

North American Porcupine with quills on demonstration. Courtesy of Wikimedia.

A common myth regarding the quills of a porcupine, is their ability to be launched from afar to attack predators. In reality, the quills must come in direct contact with the target to be stuck. These quills have microscopic barbs on the end that resist being pulled 'out' of the skin due to facing the opposite direction. In contrast, the African counterpart of this species has larger quills without barbs along with a larger body.

If you or a pet are quilled, it is commonly debated whether cutting off the tips will release pressure in the quill for easy removal. VCA Animal Hospital states this often causes the quill to splinter making removal harder and more dangerous. When an embedded quill is splintered, the chances of fragments breaking off in the body and migrating to vital organs are higher.

## What to do when quilled?

If your dog is quilled, VCA Animal Hospital recommends not attempting to remove quills yourself. Home removal without pain management may lead to abnormally aggressive responses from the pet due to the pain. It is best to minimize movement to prevent further pushing the quills internally and seek medical attention. A veterinarian can remove the quills and monitor for infections deeper in the tissues if a fragment is left behind.

Overall, it is best to remove quills quickly to prevent them from working further into the body and minimize pain. Quills move internally by about one inch per day as estimated by the Vermont Fish and Wildlife exemplifying the importance of quill removal. To minimize breakage, grab the tip of the quill with pliers and pull in the same direction of entry. The area can also be marked after removal to continue monitoring for infection or irritation. *Evidence of porcupine feeding on a tree. Courtesy of USDA Forest Service.*



## Habitat and Behavior

Porcupines are found in primarily coniferous forested areas across the northern portion of North America. These porcupines are herbivores with the ability to climb trees depending on the resources available. They also feed on tree bark which can be an indicator they are in the area. They typically den in the same location year after year during bad weather but do not hibernate over the winter. Vermont Fish and Wildlife states the North American Porcupine residing in territories from 6 to 14 acres, typically preferring to be solitary. They use their quills on their rear end for protection and warding off predators from their territory.



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## Predation and Hunting

While the porcupine does have a menacing appearance with aposematic coloration, they do have natural predators. Fishers are one of the known predators, attacking in a way to avoid the quills and flip the porcupine on its back for easier attack. Other predators include wolves, coyotes, bobcats, and even great horned owls. Find more information about the North American Porcupine at the [Animal Diversity Web](#).

Due to their foraging habits, porcupines can cause damage to forests which could be problematic for management of stands if the population is high. Porcupines also pose a threat to humans and pets that venture into their territory, especially those who may be unaware of their presence. The Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) states year-round hunting or trapping available for this species, along with a few others. To legally harvest a porcupine, all you need is a current base license per the [Small Game Hunting Regulations](#). Historically, porcupine quills were repurposed in crafting and decorating clothes by natives.



## November 2024 NRC Recap

Logan Schultz • November 7, 2024

No items were up for information or action at the November Natural Resources Commission (NRC) meeting today.

The meeting took place at Lansing Community College Downtown Campus.

At the meeting NRC Chair Tom Baird announced that he will not be seeking a second term on the commission. Chair Baird was appointed to the commission in March 2021 by Governor Whitmer. His term expires at the end of December.

Commissioners heard several presentations around a DNR policy on how to handle beavers that are having an adverse effect on trout streams. The policy is a decision tree that is intended to create a set of criteria on when removal of a beaver(s) and dams is warranted. Commissioners set aside time on their agenda to have a discussion separate from the presentations to talk about their thoughts on the policy.

There were also a number of land transactions on the agenda. MUCC reviews all land transactions exceeding 80 acres, of which there are two. Read MUCC's [NRC preview](#) for more information. The NRC meets on Thursday, December 12, at Lansing Community College West Campus.

To ensure our natural resources remain protected and managed thoughtfully and our outdoor heritage defended, join Michigan United Conservation Clubs today: <http://bit.ly/>



**Next Region 7 Meeting is December 1st**

**Hamilton Rod and Gun Club 3252 50th St. Hamilton Mi**

**Lunch: 11:30 Meeting; 12:15**

**If you would like me to show up at one of your membership meeting to give you an update of what's happening in MUCC's world, email me or call [rhbhunt3@gmail.com](mailto:rhbhunt3@gmail.com) or call 269-209-1770**

**SAVE THE DATE : March 7-9 2025**

**2025 Annual Convention**

**[Treetops Resort in Gaylord Mi.](#)**

**February 23rd 2025**

**Last Region 7 Meeting before the Annual Convention at Treetops in Gaylord March 7-9 2025. [The meeting will be held at Jackson County Outdoor Club](#)**

**Michigan Department of Natural Resources**

**[Wildtalk Podcast](#)**

# Drivers Beware: Deer Involved Crashes Continue At Alarming Pace

By Tyler Mehig • November 12, 2024

LANSING – Vehicle crashes involving deer are continuing at an alarming pace, with Michigan averaging more than 360 each day in November, the height of deer season. This year, the Insurance Alliance of Michigan (IAM) is teaming up with the Michigan United Conservation Clubs (MUCC) to encourage hunting and provide helpful information to drivers to avoid crashes. “There are more than 2 million deer in the state, and one way to manage the population and reduce the number of crashes involving deer is through hunting,” said Amy Trotter, chief executive officer of the MUCC. “The more hunters we have in Michigan and the more success they have, the more we can reduce the deer population where necessary and help prevent crashes.” Last year, Michigan’s deer harvest increased by 2%, with 347,008 deer harvested across all seasons. MUCC is the largest statewide conservation organization in the nation whose mission is to encourage people to conserve, protect and enhance Michigan’s natural resources and outdoor heritage.

IAM is the leading voice for property and casualty insurers in Michigan and represents companies large and small across the state.

“At this time every year, we know deer are even more active across Michigan, and we urge drivers to be aware and stay safe on the roads,” said IAM executive director Erin McDonough. “The past two years were the two highest years for deer-related crashes in a decade. We need all drivers to stay focused on the road, especially at dawn and dusk, so they stay safe and help prevent collisions.”

In 2023, November was the worst month for deer-auto collisions, with 11,145 total crashes. The majority of those crashes occurred in the early morning hours between 6-9 a.m.

The counties with the most reported vehicle crashes involving deer in 2023 were:

1. Kent County (2,171)
2. Oakland County (2,125)
3. Genesee County (1,605)
4. Allegan County (1,545)
5. Jackson County (1,521)
6. Ottawa County (1,517)
7. Lapeer County (1,505)
8. Calhoun County (1,332)
9. Washtenaw County (1,320)
10. Clinton County (1,306)

“No matter where you are driving in the state, the danger of a collision with a deer is real,”



Photo compliments of ME( Ron Burris)



She decided to cross at the wrong time

“Not my car”

Continued Next Pg.



IAM recommends the following safety tips:

- Slow down when traveling through deer-populated areas.
- Always wear your seat belt.
- Watch for deer, especially at dawn and dusk, when they are most active. If you see one deer, approach cautiously, as more could be out of sight.
- Deer often travel single file, so if you see one cross a road it's likely more are nearby waiting to cross. When startled by an approaching vehicle, deer can panic and dart out from any direction.
- If a crash with a deer is unavoidable, brake firmly, hold onto the steering wheel with both hands, come to a controlled stop and then proceed to steer your vehicle off the roadway.

In the unfortunate event a collision with a deer does occur, there is one way to make the best of the situation.

Trotter said the driver of the vehicle that unintentionally hits a deer has the first right to claim the deer, but if they do not, another individual may take it for salvage after obtaining a [salvage tag](#).

Over the past two years, there have been more than 117,000 deer involved crashes, yet only 595 salvage tags for deer that have been killed have been issued by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

“Choosing to salvage deer is one way in which residents can make the best out of an unfortunate situation, while providing nutritious food to their families or those in need,” Trotter said.

Salvaging deer helps to keep roadways clear and can provide nutritious meals. Most deer can provide 160 high-protein meals. If the person salvaging the deer is unable to process it or does not want it, another individual can claim the deer with a free salvage tag.

The Insurance Alliance of Michigan is a government affairs and public information association that represents auto, home and business insurance companies and related organizations operating in Michigan. Learn more about IAM and its members on [Facebook](#), [X](#) or at [insurancealliancemichigan.org](http://insurancealliancemichigan.org).

Michigan United Conservation Clubs is the largest statewide conservation organization in the nation. Founded in 1937, its mission is to unite citizens to conserve, protect and enhance Michigan's natural resources and outdoor heritage. This mission drives everything done as an organization. Follow MUCC on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [X](#), and [YouTube](#), or at [mucc.org](http://mucc.org).

March 2025 I am termed out of being your Region 7 Director. If you are interested in taking over this position. If you have any question about the obligations of being a director just give me a call. 269-209-1770. The nomination form is attached to the Email for this newsletter.

# Happenings Around the Region In December 2024 Open to the public

**Grand Valley Cap & Ballers** : Dec. 1st Club shoot and meeting. *Feb 23rd Region 7 meeting*

**Fennville Rod and Gun Club**: Dec. 22nd Basic CPL Class 8AM-5PM contact Skip Coryell at 269-838-5586

**Grass Lake Sportsman Club**: go to Facebook and website for updates.

**Hillsdale County Conservation Club**: 3835 S. Bird Lake Rd. Osseo Mi. 517-523=3990

**New Buffalo Rod and Gun Club**: Wednesdays Trap Games shoot 6:30 pm Thur. Trap Practice 6PM Sunday Trap practice 10am to 1pm. Dec. 13 Basic Hand Gun Level 1 8Am-1PM NON-ME8MBERS are welcome to attend all upcoming events!

**Dowagiac Conservation Club**: 54551 M 51 North Dowagiac Mark your Calanders: Hunters Rendezvous Feb. 8th 2025

**Bend of the River Conservation Club**: Mon. & Wed. all month Basic Pistol Training Monday's from 8am-5pm Contact Larry Hupp 269-240-3123 and Wed. 9am-4pm Contact Suzanne Beaty 312-618-3588

**Paw Paw Conservation Club** Trap Shooting every Monday year round 4:30– 10:00pm \$4 for 25 birds. Free round for anyone who shoots a perfect round (25) For info call (269) 657-8949 after 4:30 on Monday's Phone # 269-657-8949 .

**Edwardsburg Conservation Club** : 50 Bird Trap Shoot Dec. 8th 1pm-4pm Dec. 22nd 10AM. Monthly Muzzleloader shoots 10am-4pm. And 50 Bird Trap shoot Dec. 22nd 10AM

**Hamilton Rod and Gun** Dec. 13th Calcutta Protection 5:30 Draw for Calcutta is 7:00 food available.

**Jackson County Outdoor Club**: Sunday Youth League 1/5/25 1PM Beginners Class Basic Fundamentals 2:30 Intermediate Class 4:30 Advanced Class. RSVP Max 386-547-3369 or Jason 517-749-0525 Winter Leagues 1/8/25-3/12/25 Weds. Spot league 6:30 PM Thur. 1/9/25-3/13/25 Animal League 6:30PM

**Bellevue Conservation Club**: Open Trap, Skeet and 5-Stand shooting every Sunday 2-6pm and Wednesday 6-10pm. We have 3 Trap/Skeet combo fields with lights. /Jan. 18 2025 Steak Fry, Grilled NY Strip. \$18 cash bar, 6PM-8PM 8484 Greenfield Highway, Bellevue, Michigan 49021.

**St. Joseph Conservation Club**. Sundays 8, 15,22,29 Trap and Skeet 9-12pm. CPL class Dec 14th 9AM-For questions and to sign up, contact Jeff Brazo 269-689-0200

**All Species Conservation Club** Christmas Party Delton Moose Lodge. Dec. 7th 5zPM. Call Greg Peck for details at 269-998-9407 Always a good time.

**Van Buren Sportsman's Club** Open to the public every Wednesday from 5-8pm for Burger night/ Taco Salad dinner, and every Friday 5-8pm for Fish, Yummy !!

**Big 9 Sportsman Club** Breakfast 8am-10:30 Starting 1st Sunday in Nov. thru April. Cost Adults and Children over 12 \$13 Senior Citizens 65+ and children under 12 \$10. Beautiful view of the Lake. Breakfast cooked to order also A' la cart.

If you would like open to the public events in the Quiver just let me know a couple of days before the 1st of the month. [rhbhunt3@gmail.com](mailto:rhbhunt3@gmail.com)

Find your elected State Representatives

[HERE](#)

Episode 6

Michigan Out of Doors Podcast

NEW

[HERE](#)

### What's Cooking ?

#### Rabbit Stew

This is one of my old family recipes.  
You could also use this with squirrel

2 rabbits cut in serving pieces  
1/2 teaspoon dried basil leaves  
2 teaspoons salt  
1/4 teaspoons black pepper  
3 tablespoons butter  
2 medium potatoes, quartered  
1 stalk celery, chopped  
2 carrots, quartered in strips  
1 clove garlic, diced fine  
1 medium onion, chopped  
(1) 8 oz. can diced tomatoes  
1 tablespoon parsley flakes

#### Method

Boil rabbits in salt water for 10 minutes. Remove rabbit discard water. Again cover rabbits with salt water simmer until rabbit is tender. Retain 2 cups of broth. Remove rabbit, drain and cool. Remove meat from bone cut into small pieces.

Melt butter over medium heat in sauce pan and add vegetables. Cover and cook for 15 minutes. Add broth and diced tomatoes. Bring to a boil and rabbit, parley and salt to taste.. Thicken to desired consistency with flour or corn starch paste. Cook additional 15 minutes. Serving ,lightly sprinkle with graded cheese of choice. Enjoy.



Conservationist Pledge: I give my Pledge as an American to save and faithfully defend from waste the natural resources of my country, it's Air, soil and minerals, it's forests water and wildlife

This Publication is compiled and distributed by Ronald H. Burris Past Present, Region  
7 Director Michigan United Conservation Clubs