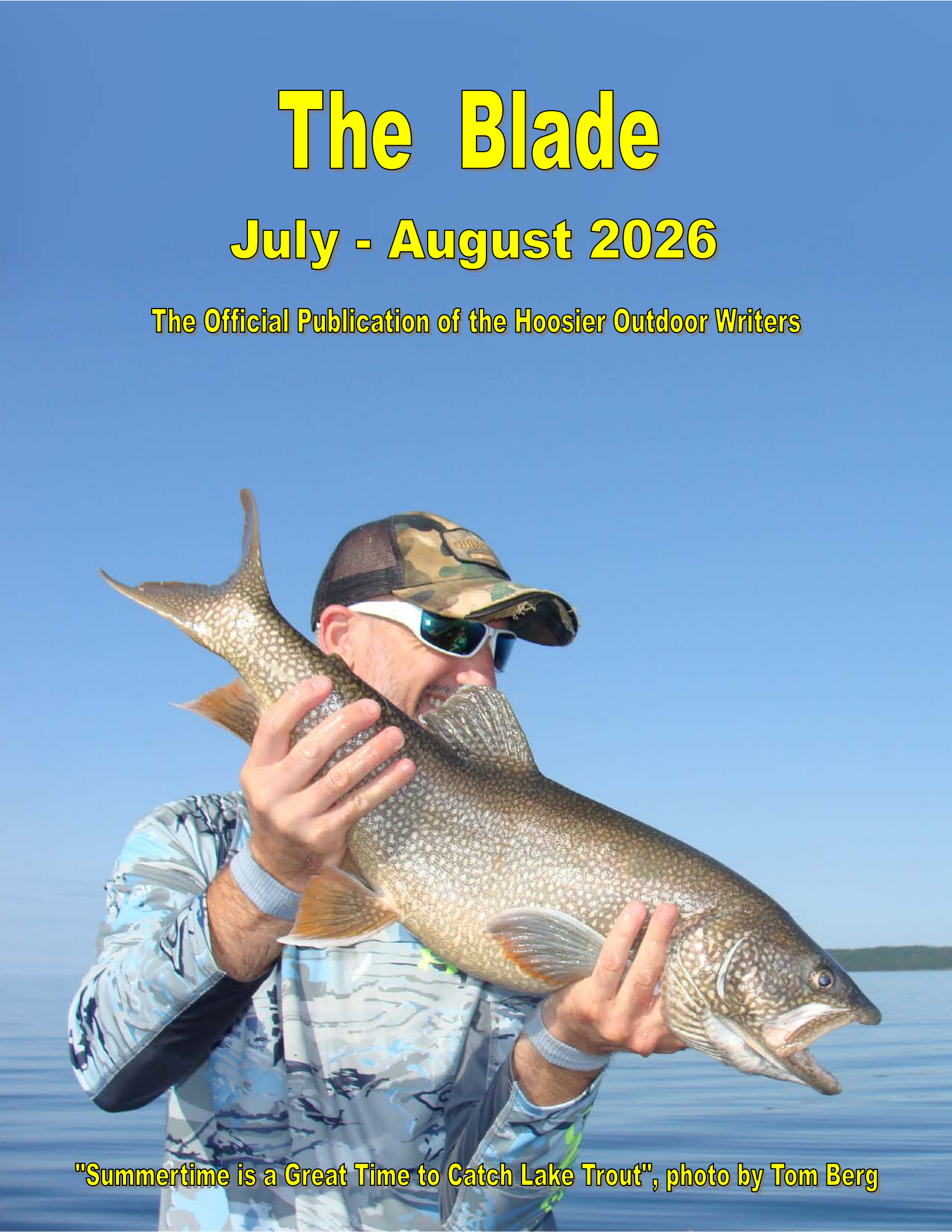
The Blade

July - August 2026

The Official Publication of the Hoosier Outdoor Writers



"Summertime is a Great Time to Catch Lake Trout", photo by Tom Berg

Hoosier Outdoor Writers

The Hoosier Outdoor Writers was formed in 1969 and has brought together many diverse groups and individuals with shared interests. The Hoosier Outdoor Writers, known among its members as HOW, is a group of dedicated media professionals who are keenly interested in the wise use of natural resources in the Hoosier State.

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Phil Bloom – 2028
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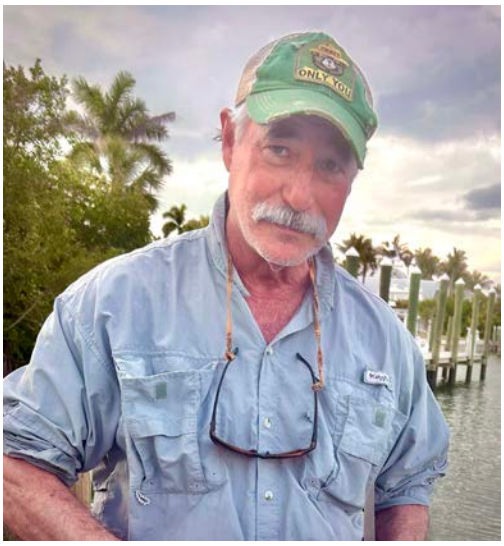
On the cover: *Lake trout are a summertime staple for anglers who head offshore in Lake Michigan and other deep waters. Lake trout require cold water, so they are usually caught near the bottom where the water is coldest. This fish came from the frigid waters of Lake Superior. Photo by Tom Berg.*

President's Message

by John Maxwell



The Lodge at Potato Creek State Park: A possibility for the 2028 HOW Meeting

How's this for a headline:
Big new state park inn and big Worster Lake hybrid striped bass.

The lodge under construction at Potato Creek State Park will be Indiana State Park's first inn constructed from the ground up since 1939, and it is rising from the southern shore of Potato Creek's Worster Lake. The modern inn south of South Bend is slated to open in late 2027. Plans call for 120 guest rooms, a restaurant that seats 150, a conference center and an indoor aquatic center.

The new lodge will join Pokagon State Park's Potawatomi Inn, where HOW held their 2026 annual meeting, as one of two northern-Indiana state park inn locations.

HOW's fishing enthusiasts will be interested to know that hybrid striped bass (wipers) have been stocked into the 327-acre Worster Lake since 2011 as an additional predator for gizzard shad, which often compete with more desirable gamefish. Wipers are a cross between a white bass and a striped bass and they grow fairly quickly.

A 2020 lake fishery survey showed the lake's stocked wipers were averaging about 2 inches of growth per year, with 9-year-old fish approaching a length of 30 inches. The Indiana state record wiper was 32 inches long and weighed 22 pounds, 2 ounces. So maybe if wiper growth trends stay steady through 2028? Do the math …

It might be fun to have a HOW wiper mini-tournament that produces a new state record! "The wipers are working at Worster Lake," said northern Indiana fisheries research biologist Thomas Bacula. "We are also seeing larger panfish. Prior to the wipers, our surveys found no bluegill over 8 inches. Recent surveys have shown larger bluegills are beginning to show up."

Above Left: Architectural rendering of finished lobby at Lodge at Potato Creek. **Above Right:** DNR's northern Indiana fisheries research biologist Thomas Bacula boats a Worster Lake wiper near sundown. Maxwell photo.

The Hoosier Outdoor Writers

New Members, Past Presidents and Memorial Section

HOW Extends a Warm Welcome to our Growing Ranks of Outdoor Communicators:

Brendan Kearns (Associate)
Sponsor: Tom Berg

Memorial to Deceased HOW Members

Those Who Have Gone Before Us:

Jack Alkire – HOW President 1979
Bill Beeman – Executive Director Emeritus
Don Bickel
Ed Blann
Charlie Brown
Gary Carden
Jim "Moose" Carden – HOW President 1982-83
George Carey
John Case
Bill Church – HOW President 1972
Gene Clifford
Jack "Big Jake" Cooper
Mark Cottingham
Larry Crecelius – HOW President 2003
Jerry Criss
John Davis – HOW President 1984-85
Gary "Dox" Doxtater
Dick Forbes
Tom Glancy – HOW President 1977
Dale Griffith
Phil Hawkins
Fred Heckman
Marty Jaranowski – HOW President 1996
Phil Junker – HOW President 1975+2002
Jack Kerins
Mike Lyle – HOW President 1981
Ralph "Cork" McHargue – HOW President 1976
Dick Mercier
Bob Nesbit
Hellen Ochs
Jack Parry
Harry Renfro
"Bayou" Bill Scifres – HOW President – **6 Terms**
George Seketa
Hal Shymkus
Al Spiers
Robert "Doc" Stunkard
Butch Tackett
Bill Takacs
George Tilford
John Trout, Jr.
Joe West

Past Presidents of HOW

"Bayou" Bill Scifres	**1969**
"Bayou" Bill Scifres	**1970**
"Bayou" Bill Scifres	**1971**
Bill Church	**1972**
Rick Bramwell	**1973**
Jack Ennis	**1974**
Phil Junker	**1975**
Ralph "Cork" McHargue	**1976**
Tom Glancy	**1977**
Bob Rubin	**1978**
Jack Alkire	**1979**
Louie Stout	**1980**
Mike Lyle	**1981**
Jim "Moose" Carden	**1982**
Jim "Moose" Carden	**1983**
John Davis	**1984**
John Davis	**1985**
Ray Harper	**1986**
Ray Harper	**1987**
Ray Dickerson	**1988**
"Bayou" Bill Scifres	**1989**
"Bayou" Bill Scifres	**1990**
"Bayou" Bill Scifres	**1991**
Jack Spaulding	**1992**
Jack Spaulding	**1993**
John Rawlings	**1994**
Phil Bloom	**1995**
Marty Jaranowski	**1996**
John Martino	**1997**
Mike Schoonveld	**1998**
Jack Spaulding	**1999**
Jack Spaulding	**2000**
Sharon Wiggins	**2001**
Phil Junker	**2002**
Larry Crecelius	**2003**
Bryan Poynter	**2004**
Phil Bloom	**2005**
Brian Smith	**2006**
Brian Smith	**2007**
Brent Wheat	**2008**
Bryan Poynter	**2009**
John Maxwell	**2010**
Brandon Butler	**2011**
Josh Lantz	**2012**
Ben Shadley	**2013**
Bob Sawtelle	**2014**
Alan Garbers	**2015**
Ken McBroom	**2016**
Don Cranfill	**2017**
Troy McCormick	**2018**
Mike Schoonveld	**2019**
Kenny Bayless	**2020**
Kenny Bayless	**2021**
Phil Seng	**2022**
Jarrett Manek	**2023**
Bob Sawtelle	**2024**
Marilyn Culler	**2025**

Hoosier Outdoor Writers
Turn in a Poacher/Polluter Writing Contest
Official 2026 Contest Guidelines

Once again, the Indiana Turn in a Poacher (TIP) Citizen's Advisory Board is sponsoring a writing contest to encourage HOW members to promote the TIP mission and the hotline. For 2026 the prizes are again **$500 for first place; $300 for second place; $200 for third place.** Be sure to write your TIP article right away!

Requirements are simple and entering is easy! Article must be at least 400 words in length and must include:

1. Brief description of TIP (see below—does not have to be verbatim)
2. TIP Hotline (1-800-TIP-IDNR)

Although it is not required, preference will be given to stories that:

- Feature a compelling story that demonstrates how TIP can help conserve or protect fish and wildlife for the people of Indiana.
- Are published in paid publications.

To enter, submit an electronic copy of an article published between **January 1, 2026** and **December 31, 2026**. The TIP Citizen's Advisory Board will review all entries and will select the entries that best promote the mission of TIP and encourage citizens to get involved. **Entries should be marked as "TIP" entries and sent to Contest Coordinator Phil Seng (phil@djcase.com). They must be emailed by March 1, 2027.**

What is TIP?

Turn in a Poacher and Polluter, Inc. (TIP) is a non-profit conservation organization that works hand-in-hand with Indiana DNR Law Enforcement to protect our fish and wildlife resources by increasing public support and involvement in bringing violators to justice.

A poacher is a thief who illegally steals wildlife that belongs to each Indiana citizen. Poachers rob licensed, ethical hunters and anglers from recreational opportunities they bought through license fees. Pollution kills Indiana's valuable fish and wildlife resources and harms habitat.

Citizens can help stop poachers and polluters in two ways. If you see, hear or learn about a poacher or pollution that results in the death of fish and wildlife, or any other fish and wildlife violation:

- Call 1-800-TIP-IDNR
- Submit a TIP online at www.tip.IN.gov

If your TIP leads to an arrest, you may receive as much as a $500 reward, and you can remain anonymous. More information is available at https://www.in.gov/dnr/lawenfor/2745.htm

Interesting Bird Sightings in the Great Outdoors

We have been asking HOW members to submit photos and reports about interesting or unusual birds that they have seen during their outdoor adventures. The sightings do not have to take place in Indiana; anywhere in the world is fair game. All photos on these pages were submitted by those reporting.

We hope this page will not only interest bird enthusiasts, but all HOW members who enjoy spending time in the great outdoors (i.e. everybody). You may just learn something new, too!

Report from Mike Lunsford:
HOW member Mike Lunsford was a bit frustrated this past spring in hearing a wide variety of birds in his woods but was only able to photograph a few of them. He was hearing hosts of yellow warblers, American redstarts, orchard orioles, indigo buntings, and northern water thrushes, but despite investing the time, he was not able to see most of them.

Not so of one particular **Yellow-Throated Warbler** (*Setophaga dominica*) that found Lunsford's yard an inviting spot. At one time in serious decline, yellow-throated warblers are now actually expanding their range, although no one really seems to know why. Admirers of pine and sycamore tree forests with open understories, these birds love beetles, caterpillars, and flies. "I have several nice white pines near my cabin that this bird seems to forage in, and then on occasion he comes to my cabin rail for a drink or bath in a small water bowl," commented Lunsford.

Unlike most warblers that migrate north and breed in the northern USA and throughout Canada, yellow-throated warblers typically breed much farther south. Northern Indiana is near the northern edge of their usual territory.

Lunsford also keeps a sharp eye out for the various vireos that migrate into and through the state. "Indiana is home to a number of species of vireos," he said, "including the rather drab but very vocal warbling vireo and the wonderfully verbal and curious **White-Eyed Vireo** (*Vireo griseus*)." Lunsford has also photographed red-eyed vireos, but not this season.

"Vireos are among my favorite birds," Lunsford says, "and they are always a challenge to photograph because they stay in the shadows. Warbling and red-eyed vireos love the tree canopy; you are always looking up to find them. But white-eyed vireos enjoy thickets and brushy spots, often at near eye-level, and they are curious, sometimes following hikers just to see what they are doing. This white-eyed vireo showed off his lunch for me and gave me several opportunities to take his picture."

See the next page for more bird photos and information from fellow HOW members.

Interesting Bird Sightings in the Great Outdoors

Bird Reports Continued…

Report from Bill Keaton:
HOW legal advisor Bill Keaton always seems to be 'overrun' with **Ruby-Throated Hummingbirds** (*Archilochus colubris*) on his property in Owen County, and this year is no different. "We have two large hummingbird feeders (1 quart each) and four small feeders (about a pint each) and there is never a time from dawn until dark that there is not at least one hummingbird present on a feeder," said Keaton.

"We put out a gallon of sugar water every day," he continued, "and the birds drink it all. I did an internet search and learned that a gallon of nectar means we probably have about 60 hummingbirds visiting us on our property, and I believe it!"

There is a total of six hummingbirds present in the photo at right. Can you see them all?

Report from Dave Hoffman:
HOW Board Member Dave Hoffman has been exploring nearby eBird hotspots since recently moving to Hendricks County. "I discovered a gem," said Dave, "and it is only six miles away. When I drove to Blanton Woods Nature Park in Danville for the first time, I was shocked when my Merlin recorder began identifying numerous species of warblers by their calls. Some were even 'lifers'. However, it was the identification of a **Louisiana Waterthrush** *(Parkesia motacilla)* that sparked my attention. I'd never heard of a Cajun bird existing in Hoosierland."

Above: A handsome Louisiana waterthrush rests atop a fence post in Hendricks County.

Consisting of 53 acres of upland forest and more than five miles of unpaved trails, Blanton Woods follows White Lick Creek and winds past several small streams. It's designed strictly for nature study. The waterthrush can be found along the water edges as they feed while bobbing their tails rhythmically. "It turns out there is only one additional species, the Northern Waterthrush *(Parkesia noveboracensis)* which spends its summers just north of Indiana extending northward and throughout Canada and Alaska," said Dave.

The two species are similar in many respects, although the Louisiana possesses a bolder white rear supercilliam, their throat is white and unspotted, and their legs tend to be brighter pink. They do have one thing in common, though – they are both technically classified as warblers!

HOW members are encouraged to send their interesting bird photos to newsletter editor and bird enthusiast Tom Berg via email (thomas.berg@comcast.net) for use in future editions of the "Interesting Bird Sightings" page. Don't worry, it need not be a rare bird. Your fellow HOW members would love to hear your birding stories and see your exciting bird pictures.

Did you take a cool bird photo while exploring afield recently? Did you see the bird in your back yard? While you were traveling far from home? Send the photo in for other members to enjoy!

DNR Indiana Department of Natural Resources

NEWS

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Indiana Department of Natural Resources
402 W. Washington St.
Indianapolis, IN 46204

For immediate release: July 13, 2026

State-Endangered Bantam Sunfish Found in Small Tributaries to the Wabash River

Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR) biologists made an exciting discovery at a recent BioBlitz in southwest Indiana.

Our nongame aquatics biologists participated in the annual Indiana Academy of Science BioBlitz held at Harmonie State Park. During the event, a state endangered Bantam Sunfish was collected from two small Wabash River tributaries!

Prior to this discovery, the Bantam Sunfish had only been reported from two other locations in the state, however, those collections weren't confirmed by DNR biologists.

The small bantam sunfish looks a lot like the common bluegill, but it has an incomplete lateral line and has faint, irregular lines on its sides.

Extreme southwest Indiana marks the northern extent of the Bantam Sunfish's range. After this recent find, the DNR nongame aquatics team plans to expand its search in the area, hopefully finding a larger source population.

A BioBlitz is an event rooted around discovery, where professionals and amateur enthusiasts come together to search for and document as many different species as possible within a certain location.

Learn more about Indiana's rare and endangered species and the work being done to protect them here: on.IN.gov/nongamewildlifefund

Media contact:
Brant Fisher, Nongame Aquatic Biologist
Cell: 317-717-5870, office: 812-526-5816, or email: bfisher@dnr.IN.gov.

DNR Indiana Department of Natural Resources

NEWS

DIVISION OF STATE PARKS

Indiana Department of Natural Resources
402 W. Washington St.
Indianapolis, IN 46204

For immediate release: July 21, 2026

Parke Community Rail Trail (Phase 2) is Now Open

The Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and Parke Trails Alliance celebrated the opening of the second phase of the Parke Community Rail Trail today in Jessup, which aligns with Governor Mike Braun's focus on making Indiana healthy and supporting time outdoors.

"Today's milestone reflects what can be accomplished when communities and partners work together to expand outdoor recreation," said Governor Braun. "The completion of Phase 2 of the Parke Community Rail Trail not only connects more Hoosiers to safe, high quality trail experiences, it also strengthens the local communities it runs through. We're proud to support projects like this that enhance access, encourage healthy activity, and help make Indiana's trail network one of the best in the nation."

The segment, 2.5 miles of hard-surface trail, was constructed by the nonprofit with help from a $5 million dedicated grant administered by the DNR. Phase 2 connected the communities of Jessup and Catlin, relocated a 175-year-old Whipple truss bridge to provide safe crossing across Little Raccoon Creek, and constructed a new trailhead in Jessup.

When complete, the Parke Community Rail Trail will add more than eight miles of trail between the Rockville Depot and the Vigo County line, connecting multiple cities. The project uses portions of the former Vandalia Railroad and will include eight bridges and four trailheads.

"This project represents years of planning, partnership, and community support. Phase 2 demonstrates what can happen when volunteers, local governments, landowners, donors, and trail advocates work together toward a shared vision," said Mark Davis, Parke Trails Alliance Project Manager. "We are excited to welcome the public to experience this incredible addition to the Parke Community Rail Trail."

DNR has led the largest infusion of trails funding in state history, with $180 million in dedicated trail funding administered through DNR that facilitates critical trail connections within and between Hoosier communities. A total of 63 of the 89 projects are complete, with another 16 under construction. With this opening, more than 176 miles of trail have been built since the program's inception.

Media contact:
Allen Hurt, DNR Trails Manager, 317-232-4070 or ahurst@dnr.IN.gov.

Forest Service News Release

Media Contact: Marion Mason
Public Affairs Specialist
(812) 276-4736
Marion.Mason@usda.gov
www.fs.usda.gov/hoosier

Seasonal Cave Closure Protects Local Wildlife Across the Hoosier National Forest

BEDFORD, Ind., August 13, 2026 — The Forest Service has expanded seasonal cave closures across the Hoosier National Forest to better protect vulnerable bat species during their most critical lifecycle periods. The updated forest order closes caves annually from August 16 through May 14, reducing human disturbance during fall swarming, hibernation, and spring emergence.

The Importance of Bats

Healthy bat populations help sustain forest health and support Indiana's agricultural economy. As the nation's most important predators of night-flying insects, bats contribute an estimated $3.7 billion each year in natural pest control for U.S. farmers.

Bat Populations Are in Trouble

White-nose syndrome, caused by a non-native, invasive fungal pathogen, has caused steep population declines of four species of forest-dwelling bats in Indiana: Indiana bat, northern long-eared bat, little brown bat and tricolored bat. These species are essential to the state's ecological balance and agricultural strength.

Bats are also negatively affected by disturbances during their hibernation, such as people entering caves. Disturbance can cause bats to wake and burn essential fat reserves, leaving them without enough energy to survive until warmer weather and insect food sources return.

Our Conservation Efforts

As land managers, the Forest Service recognizes the role it plays in providing high-quality habitat to support remaining bat populations. Healthy forests provide better habitat for bats and improve their ability to survive.

Our role as managers of national forests and grasslands means we are uniquely situated to be part of the solution. We are committed to doing our part to conserve and enhance bat habitat through consistent forest management approaches and by collaborating with partners to achieve shared bat conservation goals.

Continued on next page.

That's why we worked with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to develop the Bat Conservation Strategy, a plan to protect and best help these species increase their populations in the eastern United States. The plan recommends reducing disturbances of caves during their critical lifecycle periods, between August 16 and May 14.

- Beginning in August through mid-November, bats become more active near caves where they plan to hibernate. If disturbed, they may move to lower-quality hibernation sites, reducing their chances of surviving winter.
- They generally hibernate from mid-November to the end of March.
- About April 1st, bats begin emerging and roosting nearby, as they prepare to migrate to their summer habitats.

How You Can Help

- Stay out of caves and mines where bats are hibernating and honor cave closings.
- Follow the National White-nose Syndrome Decontamination Protocol to clean and disinfect clothes, footwear and equipment used in caves or mines.
- Report bats showing signs of white-nose syndrome and bats that are dead, dying or appear diseased to the Indiana Department of Natural Resources.
- Spread the word about the need to save bats.

Interested in Learning More?

- Bats Are One of the Most Important Misunderstood Animals
- Bats: "The Coolest Mammals on Earth"
- Bat Conservation International: The Future Needs All of Us
- Forest Management and Bats booklet
- Forest Service Bat Conservation Strategy

A tri-colored bat hibernates in a cave during the winter.

HOW Member News

DNR Photographer John Maxwell Retires

Longtime Hoosier Outdoor Writers member and Indiana DNR photojournalist John Maxwell has retired from the Indiana Department of Natural Resources. Maxwell's career as a photographer, writer and educator spanned more than 37 years, mostly illustrating and writing stories for the DNR's ***Outdoor Indiana*** magazine and Indiana's official fishing, hunting/trapping and recreation guides.

Since 1988, Maxwell's photography and writing have helped Hoosiers understand the importance and beauty of wildlife, natural areas, natural resource conservation and outdoor recreation. Projects ranged from photos of Indiana's first restored bald eagle chicks and river otters to photographic stories guiding state citizens to experience new parks, fish and wildlife areas, forests and nature preserves.

Maxwell says he was introduced to Indiana outdoors through Boy Scout camping and ***Outdoor Indiana*** magazines found in his optometrist's office at about the age of 12.

"To an extremely near-sighted youngster who knew only newspaper-route horizons, the destinations described in the magazine sounded so exotic -- canal boats in Metamora, covered bridges near the Shades of Death canyon, a great freshwater sea with giant sand dunes, big king salmon and lighthouses lay to the north, historic river towns, giant catfish and steam-powered paddlewheel boats plied the big Ohio River down south," said Maxwell.

Later during the 1980s, after stints as union machinist, hardware salesman, hospital phlebotomist and grief counselor, a mid-twenties career crisis and memories of photographs in Outdoor Indiana magazine led Maxwell to pursue a photojournalism degree.

"The December 1988 issue of ***Outdoor Indiana*** magazine was the first OI issue I worked on, said Maxwell. I was hired to make black-and-white prints in the magazine's photography darkroom." Maxwell eventually helped illustrate 236 issues of the magazine, while writing more than 100 feature stories for ***Outdoor Indiana*** and the DNR's now-defunct ***Focus on Fish and Wildlife*** magazine.

His photography was the part of many national awards presented to the magazine by the Association of Conservation Information (ACI), including the magazine's first place in the calendar category in 2022.

His illustrations for the DNR's annual fishing, recreation and hunting/trapping guides often won annual HOW Excellence in Craft photography awards. He took the cover shots for the Recreation Guide 21 times, the Hunting and Trapping Guide 24 times and Fishing Guide 20 times, including the 2002 fishing

(continued on next page)

guide which was awarded the *Best Fishing Guide in the Nation* by the ACI.

Other Maxwell DNR milestones: worked on OI's first issue illustrated completely with color photography, the first issue designed on a computer – instead of manual blue-line and wax-paste up, and the first issue using digital photography. Co-coordinator for the DNR sales and info booth at the Indianapolis Boat, Sport and Travel Show for nine years.

He also organized educational programming at the Indiana State Fair's Natural Resources Building for many years, was the co-coordinator for the annual Interpretive-Naturalist Training Camp three years, coordinated Free Fishing Weekend events for nearly a decade, helped create the state's GoFishIN educational program, as well as Indiana's Healthy Rivers INitiative.

He helped carry the first personal computers into the Indiana State Office Building, "…and we hooked them up into an office communications network that was called "Email," Maxwell said.

He also performed odd jobs with many DNR wildlife reintroduction programs, including the bald eagle, peregrine falcon, osprey, wild turkey and river otter programs.

Maxwell received professional degrees from Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis, and Ball State University. He currently lives in Indianapolis with his wife DeAnne.

Above: Photog John Maxwell almost cracks a smile as he gathers images for another assignment. Photo by Jarrett Manek.
LEFT: Maxwell borrowed a horse for a ride through Salamonie River State Forest back in the day, while illustrating and writing a story for ***Outdoor Indiana*** magazine about the forest's equestrian trails. Photo courtesy of John Maxwell.

John Maxwell, Living Through the Lens

Story and photos by Jarrett Manek

John Maxwell has recently retired after making a career of taking photos for the IDNR. His dedication, friendships, talent, knowledge and vision through the lens of his camera are a lifelong testament to what our natural resources are about.

For nearly 38 years, his home has been seeing sunrises and sunsets from across the state of Indiana. He is no stranger to laying in leaves, dirt, and often weeds. He has been covered in ticks and chiggers. He has wallered in the mud and fought hoards of mosquitos. He knows how to corral everything from toads to snakes and can name the wildflowers like they were his children. The gnats know his stillness and just about every wild creature both large and small known to reside within Indiana has been stalked by his camera lens. He is familiar to just about every piece of state-owned property from parks, to nature preserves, fish and wildlife areas, the capitol rotunda, and even the governor's mansion. The creeks, ponds, lakes, rivers and marshes know the sight of his signature waders.

Many of us who know him well are aware of the change that he goes through when it's "game time". The stage is set, the subject is in sight and the hat gets turned around backwards, followed by a series of continuous shutter clicks.

John Maxwell has adorned the Indiana Department of Natural Resources with a living landscape of photos for over three decades. He has won awards, written articles and has been a devoted photographer for the IDNR providing the true heart of what Indiana has to offer through his photos.

From the ***Outdoor Indiana*** publication to his early years with ***Indiana Outdoors*** interviews, he is not only a photographer, but a writer, an artist, a naturalist, a historian, a hunter, a fisherman and so much more.

Within the DNR, not many folks can say that they have walked on as much ground, floated on as much water, identified as many species, and have seen as much of what our state has to offer as John – and get paid to do it. He has not only been the heart of what so many of us see in outdoor photographs, but he has won the hearts of so many Hoosiers through his photos.

(continued on next page)

On behalf of everyone who has worked with you and everyone who has seen your work, "**Thank You** for making the best of your career and letting us be a part of it!"

Above Left: John Maxwell pauses for a moment between photos at an Indiana creek.
Above Right: Maxwell lays on the ground to get a better angle when photographing morel mushrooms (hard to see from far away) with a shed deer antler right behind them.
Right: Another day, another creekside photo!

Unexpected Consequences

by Bill Keaton (photo by Rita Keaton)

All my life, I have loved hunting and fishing, and the outdoors in general. In early 1992, my good friend, Jack Spaulding, asked me if I would be willing to provide legal services to the Hoosier Outdoor Writers and if so, what would be the cost. After learning about HOW, I told him I would be glad to do that at no cost. That started a long and friendly relationship with many HOW members. Over the years, I have missed very few HOW meetings, and I consider many of our members good friends and would at least recognize most of you as fellow members.

On March 9, 2026, I received what turned out to be a catastrophic injury. Because many of you have not heard, Tom Berg asked me to prepare something for ***The Blade*** to bring all of our members up to date.

We have a very large and beautiful shagbark hickory tree growing in the field behind our house. Under it and growing up into it was a black locust tree with about a twelve-inch trunk. It was in my way, so I decided to cut it down. I have cut trees of all sizes since I was about twenty years old when I could afford a chain saw. I know quite well the safe procedures for cutting down trees. This was a very small tree, so I didn't have concerns. What I didn't know (and there was no way to know) was that the hickory tree had also grown into the locust tree and was putting a great deal of sideways pressure on the locust. Except for that unseen dynamic, I did everything right.

Bill Keaton is recovering and doing very well!

When I made my final cut, I stood to the side of the locust just in case it kicked back. What happened next was totally unexpected and catastrophic for me. Because of the pressure the hickory was putting on it, the tree kicked suddenly and violently to the side hitting me in my lower right leg. It was so fast and violent that the next thing I knew, I was sitting on the ground about ten feet to the side of the tree I had cut.

Surprisingly, I was not in a lot of pain, but there was a lot of blood on my pant leg. When I pulled up the pant leg, I could see that I had a compound fracture of my tibia and fibula with the bones sticking through the skin. I had my phone, so I called my wife, Rita, who was in the house, and she called 911. She also called our daughter-in-law, Nicci, who lives nearby and is a trauma nurse and flies on Lifeline to care for injured people. Nicci and Rita rendered immediate and emergency care to control the bleeding.

When the ambulance arrived, I was assessed and taken to Bloomington Hospital. I was told that I also had a fractured right ankle and had a four-inch by one-inch-deep gash in my right calf. I had surgery later that afternoon, and a rod was inserted into my right tibia, and a plate was put on my right ankle. After a few days in the hospital, I was discharged to recover and heal at home.

(continued on the next page)

(continued from previous page)

All was going well. I had virtually no pain, and I was weight bearing on my leg very quickly. By mid-June I was walking without a limp and with no pain. However, I woke up on June 15th with pain in my lower right leg at the fracture site, and a walnut-sized red lump there. I thought I had just overdone things the day before.

On Tuesday morning the pain was worse, and the lump had doubled in size and had developed a black center. I called my orthopedic surgeon, and he took me right in. He prescribed antibiotics and sent me home. The next morning (Wednesday), the surgeon called me at 7:00am and said he was so worried about me that he had slept very little that night. He said he wanted me to go to Methodist Hospital in Indianapolis for in-patient I.V. antibiotics and have their team of orthopedic surgeons take over my care.

Unfortunately, they couldn't get me in until Friday, June 19th, and by then the lump was black and discharging grossness! On Monday, June 22nd, one of the surgeons at Methodist told me the bones had not healed at all, and the only reason I was walking on the leg was because of the rod holding the bones together. He said I had two options. The first was that I could take high doses of antibiotics for the rest of my life with the possibility of amputation at a future date. He said to avoid amputation, the wound would have to heal and the bones would have to begin to heal, too. The antibiotics would still have to continue to work the rest of my life. The second option was immediate amputation of my lower right leg.

After discussing the options with Rita, individually with our four adult children, and with my nephew who is a physician, everyone was on the same page: amputation now. So, on June 23, 2026, my lower right leg was amputated. I was assured by the doctor that I would be able to hunt by October! (As a side note, my research showed that in about 34% of fractures of the type I had, amputation results due to residual infections.)

I have received prayers from literally thousands of people. I can assure you that prayers work! My healing is well ahead of normal according to the orthopedic surgeon who released me from further treatment on August 12th.

I am currently working with a prosthetist who is fitting me for an artificial leg. I am already at the end of that process, and I am scheduled get my new prosthetic leg on September 23rd.

For those of you who prayed for me, please accept my sincere thanks.

Bill Keaton

At Right: Bill Keaton is doing very well. Here he is getting fitted with his prototype prosthetic leg. This initial version was about a half inch too long, so they will use that information when making his permanent prosthetic leg. As mentioned above, it should be ready on Sept. 23, and then there will be no stopping him!

Manek Family Troll for Walleye
At the 'Walleye Capital of the World'

HOW Past President Jarrett Manek and his family headed for Lake Erie earlier this summer, and it sounds like they had a great trip. Here is Jarrett's report:

"The Port Clinton area of Ohio on Lake Erie has long been revered as the walleye capital of the world," said the elder Manek. "There is definitely good reason to make that claim, too. In July I took my son, Wyatt and my daughter, Abby on a father/kids trip to celebrate Wyatt's birthday. It has become a tradition for him to want to go fishing somewhere for his birthday. Usually it's at a local lake or the clean water of the Blue River just down the road. But this time it was Lake Erie. I seriously can't think of anyone who would turn down a three day trip catching one of the best tasting fish: walleye!"

"I'm not a seasoned veteran when it comes to trolling, but with the correct equipment, some research and a little practice, fish were getting netted."

"On my boat we have simple depth finders to find the fish in the water column, reel counters to figure out how far back the baits were running, a mixture of lure colors and some Off Shore Tackle (OST) planer boards (which was a HOW raffle item). The correct speed is critical, too. A trolling speed of 1.9 – 2.5 mph seemed to get the lures to the correct depths and produce strikes. We ran mostly deep diving Bandit lures anywhere from 70-120 feet behind the boat. With four rods, that kept the baits at a mixed level of 15-20 feet deep."

Above (L-R): Wyatt. Abby and Jarrett Manek display some good-eating Lake Erie walleyes.
Below Left: Lots of bugs hatch from the water and land everywhere, including on this OST hat.
Below Right: The younger Manek crew show off a few more walleyes that they caught.

"I have found that if you spend a little money on extra lures and shirts, the local bait shops will happily share the latest fishing report. Otherwise you can look at the Lake Erie Western Basin fishing report and sift through what the guides are saying. They pretty much share how they are catching them and where."

"Of course there's a few bugs to tolerate, an occasional non-target fish like catfish, drum or bass that get caught, but mostly we were picking up nice 18"-22" walleye with an occasional 16" fish. Larger fish in the 24" range were being caught too."

"Nevertheless, not much can beat the taste of fresh walleye and the good times spent with your kids, family and friends in a boat."

HOW Members Attend Recent OWAA Conference in Madison, Wisconsin

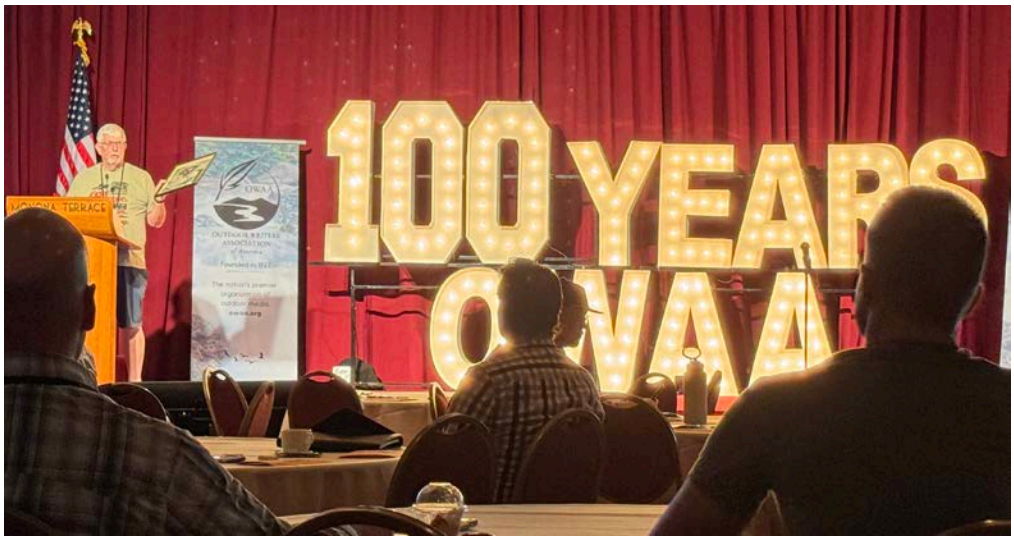
HOW members Phil Bloom, Marilyn Culler and Ken Keffer attended the recent OWAA conference in Madison Wisconsin, and evidently had a great time!

Here are a few photos supplied by Keffer and Culler, with photo captions below.

Above Left: Phil Bloom (left), Marilyn Culler (center) and Ken Keffer (right) stop for a quick photo. Bloom and Keffer are past-presidents of OWAA; this was Culler's first OWAA conference. **Above Right:** Bloom discusses the original menu from the meeting of the founders of OWAA.

Right Center: Phil Bloom (left), Marilyn Culler (center) and OWAA member and podcaster Howard Fox (right) pose for the camera.

Bottom Right: Phil Bloom stands at the podium and talks about OWAA and the fact that the organization was founded in 1927 and next year it will be 100 years old. Bloom enjoys his role as OWAA historian and has done much research on the early days of OWAA. All photos here courtesy of Ken Keffer and Marilyn Culler.



Unusual Nature Photos from the Hoosier Outdoors
Sponsored by W.R. Case & Sons Cutlery

The Softshell Turtle Has an Unforgettable Face and Snout

Close-up →

Original ←

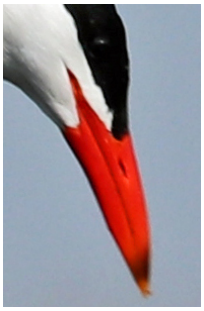
The "What is it?" photo from the previous issue was evidently too easy, since it was identified by eleven (11) HOW members. Mike Schoonveld, Ken Keffer, Mike Lunsford, Gary Redmon, Nate Mullendore, Jarrett Manek, John Maxwell, Phil Cox, Jack Spaulding, Troy McCormick and Brandon Butler were all able to identify it. When we drew a name at random for the **Spartan Precision Equipment** tripod, Jarrett Manek was the lucky winner. Congrats, Jarrett! We will send the prize to you.

As can be seen in the photo above, the mystery creature for this issue was a Softshell Turtle. We did not require an exact species this time, mainly because we are not turtle experts and we were not sure if this was a spiny softshell or a smooth softshell turtle! About half of those responding said "spiny" and the other half said "smooth". Someone who sees the larger photo may be able to tell the difference. Next time we will get a better overall photo!

Softshell turtles have a characteristic "soft" carapace, or shell. It is actually leathery and pliable, especially along the outer edges of the shell, and lacks the hard scutes of other turtles. Their head features an especially long snout with round nostrils – a face that is hard to forget. Like other turtle species, softshell turtles are often seen basking in the sun on the bank or on logs near the water. They are mostly meat-eaters, and regularly eat fish, crustaceans, mollusks, amphibians and insects.

For this issue, our friends at **W.R. Case & Sons** have donated a very nice prize for the HOW member who guesses the right answer to this issue's "What Is It?" question. This time the prize will be a **Case Barlow XR Crossroads Richlite** pocket knife. See below for more info on the prize and this issue's nature question.

Berg Poses Another Nature Photo "What Is It?" Question



Tom Berg has posed another Nature Photo mystery. The photo shown at right is part of a close-up photo of a creature that can be found in Indiana at certain times of the year. It's unlikely that you will see it in your own back yard, though. Have you ever seen this image when spending time outdoors?

This creature may be easy for some people to identify, and harder for others. But we'll see. Do you know of any creatures that look like this? This time you must identify the exact species. If you think it's a toad, for example, go ahead and guess "American toad" (hint: it's not a toad). If you think you know the answer, send it in an email to thomas.berg@comcast.net. If you're right, you'll be entered in this issue's prize drawing!

As mentioned above, **W.R. Case & Sons** (www.wrcase.com) has donated a great pocket knife for the HOW member who guesses the right answer to this issue's "What Is It?" nature question. The cool Barlow XR Crossroads knife has a Luna Richlite handle and is model #53161. This pocket knife has an MSRP of $118.99, so start thinking! If multiple people guess correctly, we'll draw a winner at random from the correct entries. All nature photos on this page by Tom Berg.

HOW Supporting Members Win Awards at 2026 ICAST Show

Orlando, FL: The 2026 ICAST show (International Convention of Allied Sportfishing Trades) held in Florida from July 14-17 was another great one, showcasing the products of many of the premier companies in the fishing tackle industry. Nearly 12,000 media and industry representatives from the global sportfishing industry (74 countries) attended the show to see the latest and greatest innovations in fishing gear, tackle, accessories and apparel. This year, more than 540 companies exhibited, and they entered 870 new products into the show's revered New Product Showcase for a chance to be recognized with a "Best of Category" honor. A total of 39 category winners took home a prestigious prize as the top product in their class this year.

Just like last year, many of the top new product awards were won by our innovative **HOW Supporting Members**. Here is the list of ***Best of Category*** winners from our HOW corporate members:

Fly Fishing Rod
St. Croix Rod
IMPERIAL Fly Rod
Contact: Josh Lantz
Email: joshl@stcroixrods.com

Freshwater Rod
St. Croix Rod
TRIUMPH Freshwater Rod
Contact: Josh Lantz
Email: joshl@stcroixrods.com

Saltwater Soft Lure
Rapala
Crush City IMPOSTER
Contact: Matt Jensen
Email: matt.jensen@rapalavmc.com

Freshwater Soft Lure
Rapala
Crush City "THE CEO" 21
Contact: Matt Jensen
Email: matt.jensen@rapalavmc.com

More HOW Supporting Member **ICAST** category winners shown on the next page.

HOW Supporting Member News

HOW Supporting Member **ICAST** category winners continued from the previous page.

Non-Braided Fishing Line
Seaguar
BRAWLR Monofilament
Contact: Chuck Reynolds (Omnivore Agency)
Email: chuck@omnivoreagency.com

Fishing Accessory
Rapala
High Capacity Line Remover
Contact: Matt Jensen
Email: matt.jensen@rapalavmc.com

Novelties & Wellness
Rapala
Rapala Giant Lure Bald Eagle
Contact: Matt Jensen
Email: matt.jensen@rapalavmc.com

ICAST stands for the International Convention of Allied Sportfishing Trades, a mid-July event that is billed as the world's largest sportfishing trade show by the American Sportfishing Association, the owner and organizer of the show. For more information on **ICAST** and each of the category winners, check out the ICAST website: www.icastfishing.org.

HOW Supporting Member News

These pages are devoted to the loyal supporting members of the Hoosier Outdoor Writers. Brief descriptions of new products, award-winning products and press releases are listed here. HOW members interested in reading more can visit the supporting member websites or call or email the media contact for more information.

Introducing the NEW Frontier ED X Gen 2 Binoculars

Fort Wayne, IN (July 11, 2026) – Introducing the NEW Frontier ED X Gen 2 binoculars from Hawke Optics, the next generation of our most renowned binoculars. Designed for those who demand top-tier optical performance and impeccable craftsmanship, the Frontier ED X Gen 2 delivers exceptional clarity, color accuracy, and wide-angle views, wherever your adventures take you.

Featuring Extra-Low Dispersion (ED) glass, premium Lanthanum ocular elements, and dielectric coated, phase-corrected BAK-4 roof prisms, the Frontier ED X Gen 2 produces bright, sharp images with outstanding light transmission and true-to-life color. The fully multi-coated optical system and wide-angle optics combine to deliver an immersive, edge-to-edge view, while additional field flattening lenses in the 42mm models ensure pinpoint sharpness right to the periphery.

A durable magnesium alloy chassis keeps the binoculars lightweight yet precision engineered for optimal performance in the hand and in the field. Featuring replaceable twist-up eyecups, water-repellent objective lens coatings, and a nitrogen-purged, waterproof and fog-proof build, the Frontier ED X Gen 2 is supplied with a premium case, neck strap and lens covers - ready for wherever the challenge takes you.

Includes the Hawke No Fault Lifetime Warranty.

Media Contact: For more information, HOW members may contact Jonina Costello at Full-Throttle Communications, phone: 805-529-3700 or email: jcostello@full-throttlecom.com.

S3DA Indoor Open Returns to ATA Show Week in 2027

New Ulm, MN (July 27, 2026) — The Archery Trade Association is pleased to announce the return of the S3DA Indoor Open as part of ATA Show Week, Jan. 7-10, 2027, at the Indiana Convention Center in Indianapolis. The S3DA Indoor Open is a youth archery tournament hosted by Scholastic 3-D Archery (S3DA).

Open to archers ages 8-18, the S3DA Indoor Open will take place Jan. 8, 2027, welcoming competitors of all experience levels. An S3DA membership is not required to participate. The event gives young archers the opportunity to compete during the biggest week in archery when manufacturers, retailers, competitive archers, bowhunters and archery enthusiasts gather in Indianapolis.

"S3DA is excited to return as part of ATA Show Week in 2027," said Cody Kirby, executive director of S3DA. "The opportunity to host an S3DA-sanctioned event alongside the ATA Trade Show allows us to showcase the program while giving retailers, manufacturers and industry professionals a firsthand look at the next generation of archers and customers."

The 2027 S3DA Indoor Open will feature divisions for Junior Eagle (age 8), Eagle (ages 9-11), Youth (ages 12-14) and Young Adult (ages 15-18). Competitors may participate in Barebow, Olympic Recurve, Fixed Pin and Open Equipment categories. The event will be shot as a half "Rushmore Rumble" round using the Vegas 5-spot target face, providing young archers with the opportunity to experience the same competition format used during one of the premier tournaments held during ATA Show Week.

In addition to the Indoor Open, S3DA will host Basic Instructor Certification Courses during ATA Show Week. The four-hour course provides the first step toward becoming an S3DA Basic Instructor and starting or coaching an S3DA club or team. New team grants are also available for individuals interested in growing youth archery opportunities in their communities.

Event registration opened beginning August 3.

ATA Show Week at a Glance

The S3DA Indoor Open is one of many events taking place during ATA Show Week, bringing together business, competition, bowhunting and archery enthusiasts in Indianapolis.

- Jan. 7-8: ATA Trade Show
- Jan. 8: S3DA Indoor Open
- Jan. 8-9: World Archery Indoor World Series 500
- Jan. 8-10: NFAA Rushmore Rumble
- Jan. 9-10: Archery & Bowhunting Supershow

Registration for the 2027 ATA Trade Show and ticket sales for The Archery & Bowhunting Supershow go live on Aug. 3. To learn more about ATA Show Week, including event schedules, participating brands, registration and ticket options, visit atashow.com.

Media Contact:
Tristan Asbury, Director of Marketing and Communications,
email: tristanasbury@archerytrade.org

HOW Supporting Member News

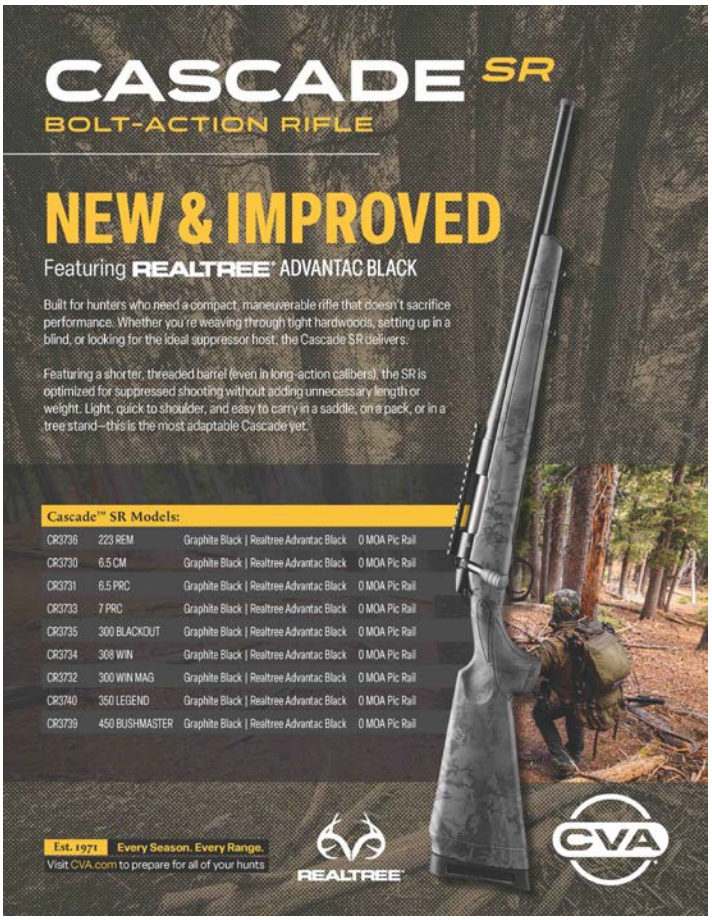
The New CVA Cascade SR is Purpose-Built for Suppressed Hunts

Lawrenceville, GA (July 14, 2026) – The CVA Cascade SR is built for hunters who put in the work and need a rifle that works just as hard. With shorter, threaded Bergara barrels purpose-built for suppressed hunting, the SR keeps overall length in check while staying quick to shoulder in a blind, saddle, or tight timber.

Dressed in Realtree Advantac Black and offered in a wide range of chamberings, from long-range magnums to straight-wall options, the Cascade SR is designed to fit the way you hunt. Add in durable Cerakote, premium adjustable trigger, removable stock spacer, and CVA's Accuracy and Satisfaction Guarantees, and you have a compact, suppressor-ready rifle ready for every season and every range.

Key Features:

- Threaded Bergara barrels in 16.5, 18 & 20" lengths
- Realtree Advantac Black Camo
- Cerakote barrel and action action
- Premium adjustable trigger from 2-4lbs
- 1" Removable stock spacer for adjustable length of pull
- Backed by CVA Accuracy & Satisfaction Guarantees



Media Contact:

HOW members may contact Tony Smotherman, Head of Influencer Relations for additional info and product images.

Tony Smotherman
Head of Influencer Relations
BPI Outdoors
Email: tony@BPIguns.com
Phone: 615-828-8900

HOW Supporting Member News

Healthy Homemade Snacks for Busy Back-to-School Days with Hi Mountain Seasonings

Riverton, WY (Aug. 26, 2026) – As backpacks are packed and families settle into the back-to-school routine, healthy, protein-packed snacks are more important than ever. Instead of reaching for highly processed snacks loaded with sugar and preservatives, families can prepare delicious homemade jerky and Snackin' Sticks using Hi Mountain Seasonings' complete line of easy-to-use kits.

Whether you're fueling young athletes after practice, packing lunches, heading out on a hunting trip, or simply seeking a healthier between-meals snack, homemade jerky and Snackin' Sticks deliver the protein and energy active families need.

Hi Mountain Seasonings offers an impressive selection of 25 different Jerky Cure & Seasoning Kits, allowing home chefs to transform beef, pork, poultry, wild game—even fish—into flavorful, high-protein snacks. From classic Original Blend and Cracked Pepper 'N Garlic to spicy favorites and regional flavor profiles, there's a recipe to satisfy every palate.

For those who prefer bite-sized sticks, Hi Mountain also offers 14 Snackin' Stick Kits that make it easy to make delicious meat sticks from beef, pork, poultry, or wild game. Perfect for lunch boxes, road trips, camping adventures, hunting blinds, or after-school activities, these convenient snacks are easy to grab and packed with flavor.

One of the greatest advantages of making jerky and Snackin' Sticks at home is knowing exactly what goes into every batch. Families can select high-quality cuts of meat, control the ingredients, and prepare snacks that are high in protein and free of many unnecessary fillers often found in commercially produced products.

The kits are designed for both beginners and experienced home processors, with simple, step-by-step instructions that make it easy and enjoyable to produce professional-quality jerky and Snackin' Sticks. Whether using meats from the grocery store or processing venison, elk, wild turkey, waterfowl, or other harvested game, Hi Mountain Seasonings helps ensure outstanding results every time.

"Back-to-school season means busy schedules, and having nutritious snacks on hand can make all the difference," said Hans Hummel, owner and president of Hi Mountain Seasonings. "Making your own jerky or Snackin' Sticks is a fun family activity that yields healthy, protein-rich snacks everyone will enjoy and gives you complete control over the ingredients." With dozens of flavor options, families can make multiple varieties to satisfy everyone's tastes, ensuring snack time never gets boring.

For more than 35 years, Hi Mountain Seasonings has helped hunters, anglers, home cooks, and outdoor enthusiasts create flavorful homemade dishes using premium-quality seasonings, cures, brines, marinades, and sausage-making products. For more information about Hi Mountain Seasonings' complete line of Jerky Cure & Seasoning Kits, Snackin' Stick Kits, and other premium products, visit **www.himtnjerky.com** or Click Here.

Media Contact:
Karen Lutto Leatherwood
Cell: 804-539-6699, Email: karen@hunteroc.com
HOC Website: www.hunteroc.com

HOW's Supporting Member Websites

Archery Trade Association - www.archerytrade.org
B'n'M Pole Company - www.bnmpoles.com
Black River Tools - www.blackrivertools.com
BoatUS - www.boatus.com
BPI Outdoors - www.BPIguns.com
Church Tackle Company - www.churchtackle.com
Cocoons Eyewear - www.cocoons.com
Daisy Outdoor Products - www.daisy.com
Dardevle by Eppinger - www.dardevle.com
DEX FingerLight - www.fingerlight.com
Ducks Unlimited - www.ducks.org
Egret Baits - www.egretbaits.com
Fight'N Flies - www.facebook.com (search)
Finn Tackle Company - www.finnspoons.com
Flying Fisherman - www.flyingfisherman.com
G Pucci & Sons - www.p-line.com
Gapen Company - www.gapen.com
Gaylord Area CTB - www.gaylordmichigan.net
Gill Fishing - www.gillfishing.com
Grundens USA - www.grundens.com
Habit Apparel - www.habitoutdoors.com
Hawke Sport Optics - www.hawkeoptics.com
HHA Sports - www.HHAsports.com
Hi Mountain Seasonings - www.himtnjerky.com
Hobie Eyewear - www.hobieeyewear.com
Hornady Manufacturing - www.hornady.com
Indiana Destination Development Corporation - www.visitindiana.com
Kehrer Fish Co - www.kehrerfishcompany.com
Lawrence County Tourism - www.limestonecountry.com
Li'L Tuffy Swimbait - www.ramblingangler.com
MEC Outdoors - www.mecoutdoors.com
Mepps by Sheldons', Inc - www.mepps.com
Mercer Sport - www.mercersport.com
Mister Twister - www.mistertwister.com
MOJO Outdoors - www.mojooutdoors.com
Moving Water Outfitters - www.mwoutfitters.com
Mustad - www.mustad-fishing.com
Nat'l Shooting Sports Foundation - www.nssf.org
National Wild Turkey Federation - www.nwtf.org
Nesco Vacuum Sealers - www.nesco.com
Norsemen Outdoors - www.norsemenoutdoors.com
Nothead Tackle - www.notheadtackle.com
O.F. Mossberg & Sons, Inc. - www.mossberg.com
Old Salt Angling - www.oldsaltangling.com
OnX Maps - www.onxmaps.com
Otis Technology - www.otistec.com
OutCast Lures - www.outcastlures.com
Owner Hooks - www.ownerhooks.com
Pheasants Forever - www.pheasantsforever.org
Plano Molding - www.planooutdoors.com
Pro-Cure Bait Scents - www.pro-cure.com
Pure Fishing - www.purefishing.com
Quad 4 Plastics - www.quad4plastics.com
Rapala VMC - www.rapala.com
RCBS - www.rcbs.com
Realtree - www.realtree.com
Renfro Productions - www.renfroproductions.com
Riton Optics - www.ritonoptics.com
Roberts Camera - www.robertscamera.com
Safari Club International - www.safariclub.org
Seaguar Fishing Lines - www.seaguar.com
Shooter's Choice - www.shooters-choice.com
Sierra Bullets - www.sierrabullets.com
Spartan Precision Equipment – www.javelinbipod.com
Speedhook Specialists - www.speedhook.com
Sporting Classics - www.sportingclassics.com
Spypoint Trail Cameras - www.spypoint.com
St. Croix Rods - www.stcroixrods.com
Steuben County Tourism – www.visitsteubencounty.com
Steelhead Outdoors - www.steelheadoutdoors.com
Sturm, Ruger & Co. - www.ruger.com
Swab-Its - www.swab-its.com
Sweet Owen CVB - www.sweetowencvb.org
Target Communications Outdoor Books - www.targetcommbooks.com
Toyota Motor Sales - www.toyotanewsroom.com
Traveler's Guide to Firearms Laws of 50 States - www.bookvalueusa.com
TTI-Blakemore Fishing - www.ttiblakemore.com
Vicious Fishing - www.getvicious.com
Vortex Optics - www.vortexoptics.com
Whitetails Unlimited - www.whitetailsunlimited.com
W.R. Case - www.wrcase.com

HOW members are encouraged to check these websites for general info and answers to product and service questions.

Hoosier Outdoor Writers

Application For New Membership

(Check Desired Classification below)

$30 _____ Active
$25 _____ Associate
$50 _____ Supporting
$15 _____ Active Student
$10 _____ Associate Student

Personal Information:

Name: _____
Company (Supporting members only): _____
Address: _____
City: _____State: _____Zip: _____
Phone: _____
Email: _____

Professional Information:

Employer (if outdoor-related): _____ Position: _____
Business Address: _____
Business Phone: _____

1. Describe your work in the outdoor field: Full Time _____ Part Time _____

2. Check your field(s) of outdoor work:

_____ Newspapers _____ Magazine _____ Radio _____ Artist
_____ Books _____ Photography _____ Lectures
_____ Television _____ Teaching _____ Trade Journals
_____ Blog/Online Work _____ Public relations _____ Government Info - Ed
_____ Other (Specify): _____

3. Are you paid for your outdoor work? Yes _____ No _____

4. Your work is published or disseminated: Daily ____; Weekly ____; Monthly ____; ____ times a year

Attach samples or other proof of your work in the outdoor field: newspaper clips, letters from station managers attesting to frequency of radio or TV broadcasts, lecture schedule or publicity clips, photo clips or artistic prints, title of latest book, masthead of trade journal showing your position, etc.

Send completed application and article copies to: **Tom Berg, 2142 Nondorf Street, Dyer, IN 46311**.

I have read the principles and membership requirements of the Hoosier Outdoor Writers and would like to enroll in the classification checked above.

Signature: _____

Sponsor: _____

Who We Are

The Hoosier Outdoor Writers was formed in 1969 and has brought together many diverse groups and individuals with shared interests. The Hoosier Outdoor Writers, known among its members as HOW, is a group of dedicated media professionals who are keenly interested in the wise use of natural resources in the Hoosier State.

What We Do

These are the purposes of HOW:

1. To improve ourselves in the art, skill and effectiveness of our craft, and to increase knowledge and understanding of the whole state.
2. To help ensure the wisest and best conservation of Indiana's resources, and the most wide-spread fair use of Indiana's recreational potential.
3. To provide a vehicle for bringing together and joining in common cause all Hoosiers who by profession, hobby or interest are devoted to the outdoors.
4. Conduct an annual Awards-In-Craft Contest among its members. The award winners are announced each year at HOW's annual conference.

What We Stand For

These are what we strive to accomplish:

1. To give the profession of outdoor writing/reporting greater recognition and understanding, even higher standards and enlarged scope.
2. To encourage and enforce high standards of professional ethics.
3. To strive always for the truth, accuracy, clarity and completeness in the dissemination of outdoor information.
4. To help friends and fight the foes of wisely conserved Indiana resources.

Membership Requirements

Membership is open to anyone who meets one of the following:

1. Active

Members are those regularly engaged in the paid dissemination of outdoor-oriented information via newspapers, radio, television, internet/online, magazines, trade journals, books, photographs, art, lectures, or other fitting media. (Basic guidelines of "regularity" of dissemination are: 20 newspaper articles, photos or broadcasts a year; 20 online articles, blogs, vlogs or podcasts a year; two national or four regional magazines or specialty journal articles a year, or one book, 10 lectures, or 20 bona fide outdoor news releases a year). The legal advisor for the association shall be an active member without meeting the basic guidelines.

2. Associate

Members are those who have a strong direct interest in the outdoors, either professional or personal, such as conservationists of all kinds; nature lovers; sportsmen; outdoorsmen; public employees in outdoor fields; educators teaching related subjects; fishing guides and tournament anglers, and retail-level dealers in outdoor goods, equipment or facilities.

3. Supporting

Members are those engaged in major commercial efforts directly related to the outdoors, such as manufacturers, distributors, service providers, manufacturers' representatives, or advertising agencies serving any of these.

4. Active Student

Members are those between the ages of 18 and 24 years who are bona fide college students with a major in journalism, communications, or natural resources sciences.

5. Associate Student

Members are those who are students who have an active interest in the outdoors in the areas of fishing, hunting, boating, hiking, nature, ecology, or in preserving the environment in general.

Calendar of Events

OWAA 2026 Annual Conference: August 22-24, 2026
(www.owaa.org/2026-conference/)
Madison, WI

Indianapolis Fall Boat & Travel Show: September 25-27, 2026
(www.IndySportShow.com)
Indianapolis, IN

AGLOW 2026 Conference: October 11-15, 2026
(www.aglowinfo.org)
Lewiston, NY

ATA Show Week 2027: January 7-10, 2027
(http://ATAshow.com)
Indianapolis, IN

SHOT Show 2027: January 19-22, 2027
(http://shotshow.org)
Las Vegas, NV

Ford Indianapolis Boat, Sport & Travel Show: February 19-21 & 24-28, 2027
(www.IndySportShow.com)
Indianapolis, IN

Indiana Motorcycle & Powersports Expo: February 19-21 & 24-28, 2027
(www.IndySportShow.com)
Indianapolis, IN

Indiana Deer, Turkey & Waterfowl Expo: February 19-21 & 26-28, 2027
(www.IndySportShow.com)
Indianapolis, IN

HOW members may submit upcoming events, along with dates, locations and other details to the newsletter editor at: director@hoosieroutdoorwriters.org for possible inclusion in a future issue of ***The Blade***.