

Wisconsin Youth Conservation Congress Update



Deer stand at dawn, by Jessica Tomaszewski

December 2022

YCC delegates and mentors,

This month's newsletter is packed with pictures, amazing experiences, personal reflection, upcoming YCC opportunities, and our annual YCC end of the year collage. 2022 has been a busy year for the YCC!

Congratulations to Caleb from St. Croix County for earning the big buck contest title! He harvested his 9-point buck in Rusk County.

A special shout out also goes to our 2022 outdoor writing contest winner, Brooke from Dodge County. Check out page 3 to read Brooke's wonderful, personal perspective on hunting and fishing.

As the year comes to an end, we want to thank all of you who support YCC delegates in big or small ways - especially our mentors, YCC Oversight Committee and parents!

Wishing you the best for a new year ahead! ~Kyle Zenz, YCC Coordinator

Big Buck
Contest
Winner



Caleb, from St. Croix Co. is pictured with his 9-point buck.

Outdoor Adventures - Deer Hunting



Shawn, YCC delegate from Racine Co. harvested his buck during bow season.



McKenna, YCC delegate from Racine Co. was successful during the gun deer season.



Brody, YCC delegate from Racine Co. shot a doe during the youth hunt in Jackson Co.



Abby, YCC delegate from Vernon Co. spent time hunting with family and friends. She is pictured with her dad and mentor, Jason.



Wisconsin Youth Conservation Contacts

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WCC Liaison: Kari Lee-Zimmermann (608) 266-0580 / Kari.LeeZimmermann@Wisconsin.gov

Welcome

We are excited to welcome new delegates to the YCC:

Anna, Racine Co.

Eric, Dane Co.



YCC Delegates Help Stock Pheasants



Brooke, Dodge County



Kane, Racine County



Olivia, Chippewa County



Abby, Vernon County

Photography Feature



YCC Alumni, Sarah captured these deer photos in Schmeckle Reserve at the University of WI-Stevens Point.

Outdoor Adventures



Anna, Racine Co. enjoyed time in the woods. No luck during the youth hunt, but the weather was pleasant.



Tommy, Vilas Co. caught his first walleye of the season! Not a keeper, but still worth a big smile!



A deer stand selfie from Gus, Milwaukee Co. delegate and WCC delegate Mitch Baker. Mitch mentored Gus during the December antlerless hunt.



Reed, WCC delegate and mentor was surprised to find ID bands on both legs of this goose. One was a federal tag and Reed is still researching the source of the other.

YCC Outdoor Writing Contest

Her Definition of the Outdoors

For more than 3 generations my family has passed down the tradition and art of hunting and fishing, raising a bloodline of amazing outdoorsmen and women. I love everything about hunting and fishing to its core. It is a lot more than just the harvest itself. Those who don't partake in those amazing things wouldn't understand that.

Being outdoors for me, is like a form of medicine. I get to breathe in the fresh air, enjoy the weather, think, and have time to myself. Most importantly, I get some time with God and get to appreciate his beautiful creation. One of my favorite things to do outside is watch the sun rise or set from the boat or tree stand. The colors are always so beautiful.

Being outside poses an opportunity for me to bond with family and close friends and make memories that will last a lifetime. Most of my time spent in the woods, field, or on the water ends up being a good memory along with learning a lesson or two with it. The fact of the matter is, it does not matter to me if I come home empty handed. For me, it's all about the experience. It makes me happy enough to observe whatever wildlife I see and to get the feeling and assurance that I did something beneficial for myself. I find great enjoyment in even just learning and getting opportunities through being outdoors, both in this organization, and in FFA. It makes me feel good and accomplished knowing what I have done and can do outdoors. It's an experience filled with peace and a spike of adrenaline all in one. Nothing beats the passion behind it and the feeling of success. Something else that is so important to me that comes with this is being ethical and wanting to make sure I can make the environment and next experience better than the last. Making sure I pick up my empties, scrap fishing line, garbage, and picking up after others.

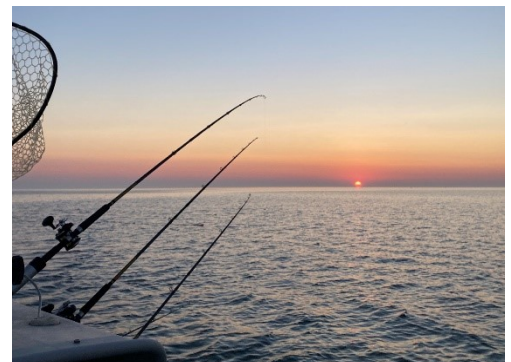
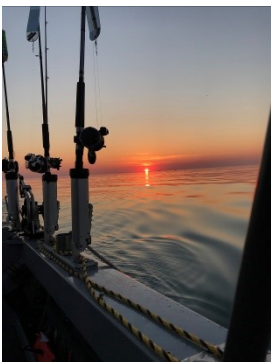
Every experience in the outdoors shouldn't be forgotten so that's why I started an outdoor journal. In it I record my successful harvests along with the amazing outdoor opportunities I get to encounter. I want to spend the rest of my life utilizing what God provided me with. I want to value the outdoors and the practices of hunting and fishing to the best of my ability. I am only 16 and get to smile to see the hours I've already put in. It gives me an opportunity to share my experiences and pass it onto others and hopefully my kids one day. It is so amazing to me it's like I can't describe it. Hunting and Fishing help me relax and find a little calm in the storm and to me there's not much better than that.

Brooke, Dodge County



2022
Writing
Contest
Winner

Brooke, YCC delegate from Dodge County is the winner of the 2022 YCC Outdoor Writing Contest. Congrats!



YCC INDIVIDUAL FOCUS OPPORTUNITY

Choose your own adventure!

We would like to help you create an individual focus opportunity based around your interests, skills, and goals.

Now is the time to start thinking about your plan and goals for this year. Each YCC delegate is encouraged to choose a conservation topic, outdoor skill, or leadership project they would like to focus on.


Your focus opportunity can be as big or small as you want it to be. It can span one day or several months.

Watch your email for additional information outlining the focus opportunity process and timeline.

Each month the newsletter will feature a project idea for one of the focus opportunity categories:



- Individual Study
- Leadership
- Skill Building
- Career Exploration

Read more about an idea for a leadership project. 



Project Idea! - Leadership

Reach out to a 4th grade teacher in your school district and see if they would be interested in ordering free tree seedlings for their students. In April, when the seedlings arrive, you can help distribute them in the classroom and talk about basic steps to plant and care for the tree.

Details:

Every year since 1984, Wisconsin 4th-grade students have been eligible to receive a free tree seedling from the DNR reforestation program to complement their Arbor Day observations. The application period for the "2022-23 Arbor Day Free Tree Seedlings for Wisconsin 4th Graders" is now open. School principals, 4th-grade teachers and 4th-grade homeschool parents are encouraged to visit [this DNR webpage](#) to order seedlings for Wisconsin 4th-grade students.

The seedlings will be shipped next spring in time for Arbor Day celebrations. They come with a protective bag and instructions on how to plant and care for them. Planting a seedling and watching it grow can be a great learning tool for students. Find [additional ideas for planning an Arbor Day celebration on this DNR webpage](#).

If you have any questions about the free seedling program for Wisconsin 4th-graders, please contact Carey Skerven at the Griffith State Nursery (Carey.Skerven@wisconsin.gov).



TREE FELLING COURSE AT UW-STEVENS POINT

In this course, high schoolers will join UW-Stevens Point forestry undergraduate students and industry professionals in a 3-day, field-intensive chainsaw training. As part of this course, you will work directly with more than 10 industry professionals to gain the knowledge, skills, and experience needed to safely fell a tree. Through guided field training you will learn how to safely cut down, delimb, and buck a tree while earning an industry-recognized certificate and college credit. Specifically, you will learn directional felling and chainsaw safety while earning 1 credit in FOR 396 from UWSP and Tree Felling certification from UWSP and Husqvarna. All participants will receive a complimentary set of personal protective equipment, donated by Husqvarna, including chainsaw chaps, hard hat with hearing protection, and safety glasses. All costs are covered by program sponsors.



Who can apply? High school junior and senior students. Application Deadline: February 3, 2023

When: March 24-26, 2023, Treehaven, Tomahawk, Wis.*

*Housing will not be available. All participating students will be responsible for their own housing and transportation to and from Treehaven.

Learn more and apply: [Science of Tree Felling course - Wisconsin Forestry Center | UWSP](#)

Alumni SPOTLIGHT

**Name: Olivia
UW-Stevens Point
Major: Fisheries**

On November 8th I got the opportunity to work with the DNR transferring Lake Sturgeon up river to the Shawano Dam to just below Keshena Falls on the Menominee Reservation. The reason they bring Lake Sturgeon up river is because Keshena is the historic spawning grounds for the Lake Sturgeon before the two dams on the Wolf River were built. Also the Menominee Tribe has a connection with the fish, which the state wants to preserve and protect.

We arrived at the river about 9am with 2 other students from UWSP. The Oshkosh Fisheries Biologist, Margaret Stadig, explained the process and what we would be doing. There were DNR staff members and other volunteers like myself participating in this process. We waited until the electrofishing crew got back and loaded the sturgeon into the holding pen. From there we used a large net to scoop the fish out of the holding pen and onto the stretcher. Then the fish were measured, checked for tags (the fish that did not have tags, got them), and checked for diseases before they were loaded into the stocking truck. We not only got to handle many large sturgeon, but also handled a 50+ inch musky. This was a great hands-on, educational experience.



Olivia is pictured next to a sturgeon on a stretcher. All fish are measured, tagged and examined for disease.



DNR fish stocking truck.



The electroshocking crew is pictured holding the largest sturgeon of the day—measuring in at 71.7”.

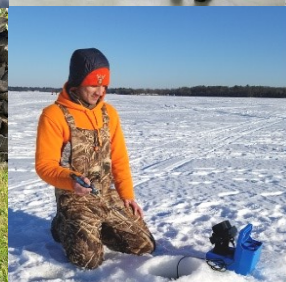
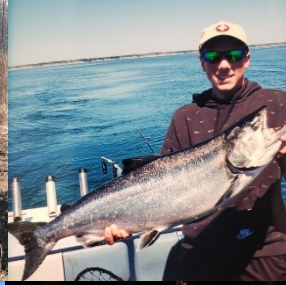


This identification tag is an older style tag. These tags are removed when fish are captured.



This photo shows a 51” musky getting scanned for an internal tag. It is always exciting for the crew to come across big fish in the survey.

2022 Youth Conservation Congress Year in Review



YCC Upcoming Opportunities

DECEMBER

- 14th - YCC virtual gathering 7:30-8:30pm. Learn about black bear management in Wisconsin.

JANUARY

- 11th - YCC virtual gathering 7:30-8:30pm. Learn about a career as a Conservation Warden.
- 21st - YCC ice fishing event, Shawano Lake.
- 21st-22nd - Free fishing weekend in Wisconsin.

FEBRUARY

- 8h - YCC virtual gathering 7:30-8:30pm. Learn about how airplane pilots assist with natural resource management in Wisconsin.

SAVE THE DATE

- March (date TBA), YCC Oversight Committee meeting.
- May 11-13, WCC Convention, Oshkosh.
- June 22, YCC career day field trip.
- August 10-13, YCC Summer Program.
- August 26, Volunteer at the Youth Zone - Waterfowl Hunter's Expo, Oshkosh.
- October (date TBA), YCC Oversight Committee meeting. YCC Learn to Hunt program.

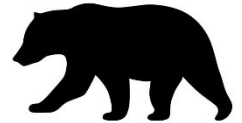
ONGOING

- Participate in a variety of events and activities across the state. State parks and forests feature public programming (hikes, presentations, nature crafts, children's programs, outdoor explorations, and more. Check for activities near you: <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/events>
- DNR Statewide opportunity: volunteer to help with conservation workdays at State Natural Areas. <https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/lands/naturalareas/volunteer.html>
- DNR State Park System volunteer information: <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/parks/volunteer>

YCC VIRTUAL GATHERING - Wednesday, December 14th 7:30-8:30pm



Learn about black bear management in Wisconsin. Sara Fischer, Assistant Large Carnivore Specialist with the DNR will cover information including: bear biology, bear den research, the current DNR management plan, bear hunting considerations and more.



Watch your email for a zoom link.

SAVE THE DATE

YCC Ice Fishing Event on Shawano Lake Saturday, January 21st, 2023, 9am-5pm



Join other YCC delegates and WCC mentors for a day of ice fishing. This day will be focused on enjoying time on the ice while learning new techniques for a successful day of fishing. We will also discuss safety considerations, regulations, winter adaptations for fish, ecology, and specific characteristics of Shawano Lake.

New to ice fishing? No problem! Mentors will be on hand to teach you everything you need to get started. Extra equipment will also be available.

Experienced with ice fishing? Great! Share your tips with others and learn more about the ecology of Shawano Lake.

This is the FREE fishing weekend in Wisconsin. We encourage you to bring a friend or relative who is new to fishing or hasn't gone fishing in years!

Please check your email for additional information and a RSVP link.