

Wisconsin Youth Conservation Congress Update

April 2023

YCC delegates and mentors,

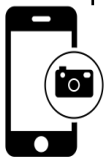
I encourage all of you to consider attending the upcoming WCC Convention in Oshkosh. This is a great opportunity to spend time with YCC delegates from across the state, learn more about the Conservation Congress, and participate in local field trips. YCC delegates who attended last year enjoyed all aspects of the convention, and highly recommend this experience.

There are many amazing YCC activities coming up. Please read through the newsletter and mark your calendar with dates for the WCC Convention, YCC career day, YCC summer program, Waterfowl Hunter's Expo, and the mentored hunt in October. I know many of you have busy school, family, sports, and work schedules, however if transportation is ever the reason you can't attend a YCC event, please let us know. There are often YCC delegates or mentors nearby who may be able to help.

I hope to see you soon!

~Kyle Zenz, YCC Coordinator

We want to feature YCC delegates in our monthly newsletters. Email or text outdoor pictures of yourself to: kyle.zenz@wisconsin.gov or 715.299.0925



Visit the [WCC Facebook site](#) to see what's new



Outdoor Adventures



Gabby, YCC delegate from Jefferson Co. spent time cleaning out wood duck boxes for the upcoming nesting season.



Brody, YCC delegate from Racine Co. constructed and installed a wood duck box in suitable habitat near his house.



Lowell Wright, Gabby (Jefferson Co. YCC delegate) and Gavin (YCC alumni) all competed in trap shooting at the Badger State Games. They all placed in their respective divisions: Lowell: 1st, Gabby: 3rd, and Gavin: 2nd.



Kyle, YCC Coordinator is pictured at the La Crosse Co. open house. She shared YCC information with the public and encouraged WCC delegates to recruit for the YCC.



Wisconsin Youth Conservation Contacts

YCC Oversight Committee Chair: Trent Tonn (262) 534-1962 / ttonn@basd.k12.wi.us

YCC Oversight Committee Vice Chair: Reed Kabelowsky (920) 242-3144 / r.kabelowsky@sbcglobal.net

YCC Oversight Committee Secretary: Tashina Peplinski (262) 483-2483 / tashina@startistries.com

YCC Coordinator: Kyle Zenz (715) 299-0925 / kyle.zenz@wisconsin.gov

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

Welcome

We are excited to welcome new delegates to the YCC:

Cody, Washburn Co.
Finn, Langlade Co.



WCC / DNR Open Houses



Caleb, YCC delegate from St. Croix Co. is pictured next to his mentor, Claude Bovi and other St. Croix Co. delegates.



Madison, YCC delegate from Brown Co. is pictured with her Calumet Co. mentors, Nicole Gates and Keith Propson, along with WCC delegates from Calumet Co.



Cody, YCC delegate from Washburn Co. is pictured with mentor, Larry Damman.

APRIL IS VOLUNTEER MONTH

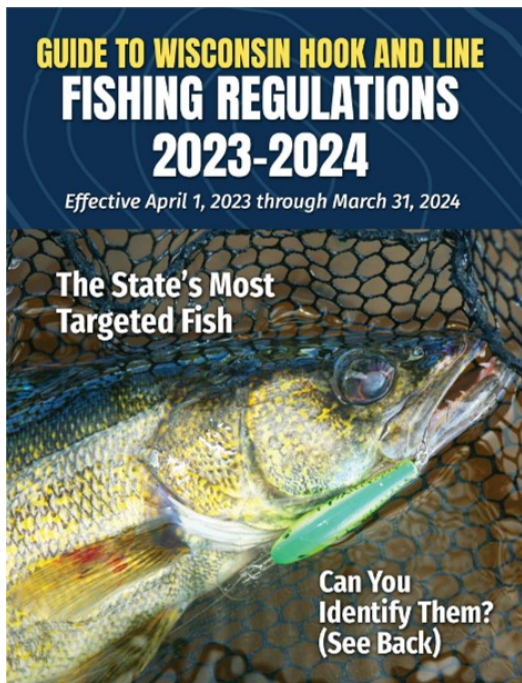
THANK YOU

Think of all of the volunteers who make our lives possible and more enjoyable. We send a huge “thanks” to the Wisconsin Conservation Congress delegates and mentors who believe in sharing their voices to help responsibly manage Wisconsin's natural resources for present and future generations.

Please thank your mentor for sharing their time and talents with you. Volunteers deserve our appreciation this month and every month!



WISCONSIN FISHING SEASON UPDATES



The [2023-2024 Guide to Wisconsin's Fishing Regulations](#) is now available.

These regulations went into effect on April 1, making now the perfect time for anglers to review daily bag and size limits and season dates. Additionally, anglers are encouraged to review and understand any specific rules or regulations associated with the body of water they plan to fish. All license requirements apply.

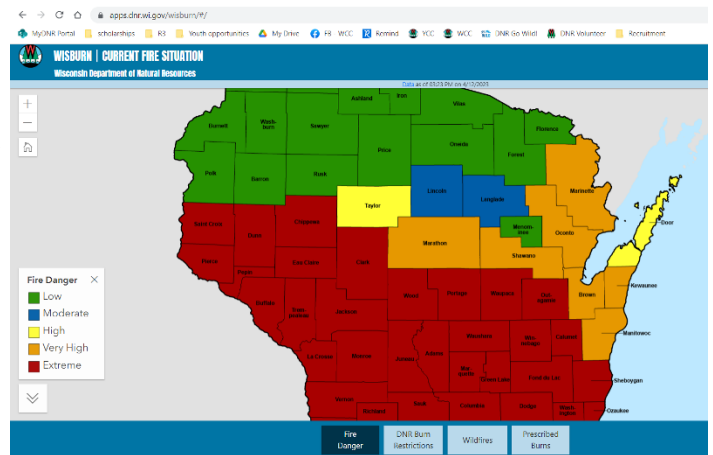
All residents and non-residents over 16 must possess a 2023-2024 general fishing license to fish in Wisconsin. Annual resident licenses cost only \$20, with information on additional options available on the [Fishing Licenses webpage](#). Fishing licenses can be purchased online via [GoWild](#), at a registered [sales location](#) or at DNR Service Centers.

The [general fishing](#) and [trout fishing regulations](#) can be found online and at [locations where licenses are sold](#).

WISCONSIN WILDFIRE INFORMATION

Spring is upon us, which is a good opportunity to remind anyone wanting to conduct a burn outdoors that this is the peak of Wisconsin's wildfire season. It's important to remember that right after the snow melts and before vegetation greening is the most critical time to take note of the rapidly changing fire conditions. Let [WisBURN](#) help! Visit apps.dnr.wi.gov/wisburn to monitor the fire danger and daily burn restrictions in *your* backyard.

WisBURN is a critical public communication tool used by the Division of Forestry to provide accurate and timely information on current fire danger, DNR burn restrictions and fire activity across Wisconsin.



WISCONSIN NATURAL RESOURCES MAGAZINE - SPRING 2023

The latest issue features a variety of stories to help everyone settle into a spring state of mind, including a deep dig into the importance of mud, tips for planning the perfect picnic and the sweet magic behind tapping maple syrup.

Those ready to enjoy the warmer weather will find suggestions for beautiful Wisconsin state parks to explore for a quiet outing, plus spring safety tips for boating and staying safe when lightning strikes. For the little ones, this issue's Kid's Corner shows how to make a rain gauge to help mini-weather forecasters monitor rainfall amounts this spring.

Spring showers bring wildflowers and native pollinators to life; learn more about growing a native wildflower garden to help our small but mighty pollinators. Spring weather also sparks mating season for many wild animals, including wild turkeys. Read about how the wild turkey recovery effort led to our thriving population in Wisconsin, where they're now scratching in the forests and strutting through suburbs.

Find these stories and so much more in the Spring issue of [Wisconsin Natural Resources](#) magazine.

Subscribe now to receive four issues of the *Wisconsin Natural Resources* print edition for \$8.97. Call 1-800-678-9472 or sign up online at wnrmag.com.



Conservation Congress Information

2023 SPRING HEARING - ONLINE

The Spring Hearing questionnaire will go live on April 10, 2023 (starting at noon) and remain open through noon on April 13, 2023. <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/about/wcc/springhearing>

The public will have the opportunity to provide input on the natural resources proposed rule changes from the DNR, and advisory questions from the Natural Resources Board (NRB) and WCC through the online input option.

You are all encouraged to participate in the Spring Hearings. If you plan to contribute your input to these questions, please take time to look over the questions in advance. If you are unsure about the meaning of any of the questions, or want more information feel free to reach out to your WCC mentor for clarification. If you don't have an opinion on a question, or if you aren't really sure, you can just click "no opinion".



2023 WCC CONVENTION

Oshkosh, Thursday, May 11th through Saturday, May 13th.

This is the one time of year when WCC delegates from all 72 counties come together. The 2023 convention site is located at the Best Western Premier Waterfront Hotel on property adjacent to the Fox River and nearby Lake Winnebago.

All YCC delegates are invited to attend this convention. Specific YCC focused activities are being planned in addition to attending general Conservation Congress meetings. This convention will help you learn more about the work of the Conservation Congress, meet new YCC delegates, participate in field trips, fish on the Fox River outside of the hotel, learn about local fish research, sturgeon populations, and much more!

All meetings and events will take place at the hotel property or within a short drive.

Thursday - YCC activities will begin around 5:30pm (fishing, field trip, YCC delegate social)

Friday – all day (meetings, learn about Lake Winnebago, fish populations, sturgeon biology, trivia, YCC delegate social, fly tying and more.)

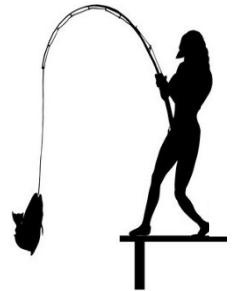
Saturday – the convention will conclude around noon.

Please check your email to learn more and register for meals and lodging.

"I really enjoyed getting to know some of the people who helped us learn about the congress including those from my county. Going to the convention and meeting all of these new people really made me realize how much I would enjoy being a part of this group of people one day. I will definitely be attending more YCC get togethers to improve my knowledge about the congress and the outdoors." - YCC delegate at 2022 WCC convention.



Bring your fishing pole!



UPCOMING CDAC MEETINGS

Each county in Wisconsin has a County Deer Advisory Council (CDAC) to provide input and recommendations to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources on deer management within their county.

Consider joining a [local CDAC meeting](#) to learn about local deer management.

The DNR is currently encouraging the public to [submit feedback for the upcoming deer season](#).

Learn about [WI DNR's statewide and county deer metrics](#).



LEARN TO HUNT BEAR APPLICATION

Beginning in 2005, the Wisconsin DNR began offering Learn to Hunt Bear opportunities. The Learn to Hunt Bear Program (LTHB) is an opportunity to expose novice hunters to the hunting experience and recruit new hunters into the sport. The Conservation Congress is one of the statewide conservation organizations that are specifically issued a bear harvest tag through the [LTH Bear Program](#).

Each spring the Conservation Congress accepts [applications](#) from novice hunters interested in participating in the LTH Bear Program. Applicants must fill out and submit an [application](#) along with a brief essay describing why they would like to be considered to receive the bear harvest tag and why they would like the opportunity to hunt bear.

Applications must be postmarked by Wednesday, April 26, 2023.

YCC SUMMER OPPORTUNITIES

ELK MONITORING IN JACKSON COUNTY

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is looking for volunteers to help our Wildlife Management staff collar elk calves between May 19 and June 18. Each shift needs 15 or more volunteers so we can collar as many elk calves as possible for our multi-year study of Wisconsin's elk herd.

If you'd like to join the fun and you're OK with a little hard work in the outdoors, please consider signing up for your most convenient availability.

Why Collar Elk Calves?

Elk collaring is part of a multi-year study of Wisconsin's elk herd. We search for calves in late spring, right around the time they're born, to take measurements and fit them with a temporary GPS collar that will grow with the elk calf.

The elk calves collared by our staff and volunteers provide crucial data for understanding elk movement, breeding and survival.

Who Should Volunteer?

Elk calf searching is fun, but it's also hard work. Volunteers should be in good shape for crossing through thick brush and uneven terrain. It's important to wear weather appropriate outdoor clothing, sturdy boots, and a mosquito head net as bug spray is not allowed during calf searching.

Sign Up For The 2023 Elk Calf Search

WHEN: May 19 to June 18

WHERE: Meet-up locations may vary, but will most likely be in Black River Falls, WI. All searches will take place in the central elk range.

Contact **Kyle Zenz**, YCC Coordinator to be added to the volunteer list.



Madison, YCC delegate in La Crosse Co. Has helped collar adult elk and calves with the DNR.

VIRTUAL FISHING CONTEST

All YCC delegates are invited to join a summer fishing contest using the Fishdonkey app. There are various species, stringer and "any other fish" categories.

Any kind or size of fish, caught anywhere could be recognized. Even if you catch nothing at all, you can follow the leader boards to see how everyone is doing.

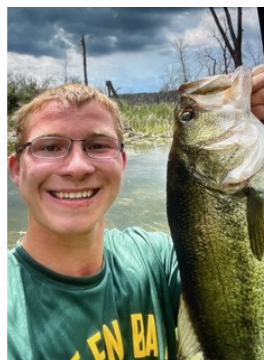
This contest runs from Saturday, May 6 through November 1st. You can join anytime throughout the contest.

Categories: Stringer of 5 for following species: (bass, bluegill/sunfish, crappie, inland trout, northern pike, perch, walleye/sauger) **and wildcard (ANY other fish).**

- Download the FishDonkey app: fishdonkey.com/app
- Tap: Fish in a Tournament
- Join: YCC

Watch a 1 minute tutorial on [How to Enter a Fish](#) , watch a 1 minute video on [How to Measure a Fish](#)

Please read all rules. All fish must be entered through the FishDonkey app. **A photo of the fish (on a measuring board/tape) AND a photo of you holding the fish are required for the caught fish to be verified.**

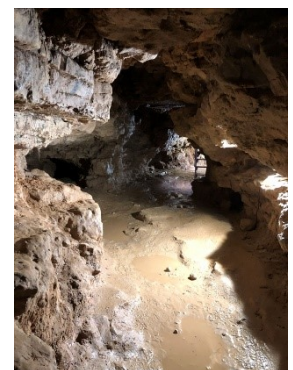


Jacob, YCC alumni, entered this bass in the 2022 virtual fishing contest.

YCC SUMMER PROGRAM

Save the date: Thursday, August 10th - Sunday, August 13.

Initial plans are being made to hold the YCC Summer Program in Calumet County. The group will be camping at Calumet County Park.



We will explore caves at Ledgeview Nature Center.

There will be many opportunities to explore the area and learn about Lake Winnebago. Activities and lessons will include cave exploration, bat ecology, survival skills, duck banding, fishing, hiking, trap shooting, archery and much more.

YCC Upcoming Opportunities

APRIL

- April 3-6 - WCC/DNR [Open Houses](#)
- April 10-13 - [Spring Hearings](#) online
- April 12th - YCC virtual gathering 7:30-8:30pm. Learn about aquatic invasive species. DNR biologists will talk about identification, impacts, prevention, and citizen science opportunities.

MAY

- 6th - Fishing opener in Wisconsin.
*Please always check regulations first. Season dates are often specific to the species of fish as well as the water body.
- May 11-13 - WCC Convention, Oshkosh.
- 17th-18th - Midwest Outdoor Heritage Education Expo (MOHEE).

JUNE

- 3rd-4th - Free fishing weekend in Wisconsin.
- June 22, YCC career day field trip, [Sandhill Wildlife Area](#), Babcock, WI.

SAVE THE DATE

- August 10-13, YCC Summer Program, Calumet Co.
- August 26, Volunteer at the Youth Zone - [Waterfowl Hunter's Expo](#), Oshkosh.
- October 14, YCC Oversight Committee meeting. YCC mentored hunt program.

NATURAL RESOURCE FOUNDATION - MEMBERSHIPS & FIELD TRIPS

YCC delegates are gifted a complimentary membership to the Wisconsin Natural Resource Foundation. Paperwork was sent in the mail detailing your membership.

If you haven't already looked into these field trips, please do. There are some amazing, one of a kind opportunities to learn about natural resources from experts around the state.

Information about the NRF Field Trips: <https://www.wisconservation.org/field-trips/> You will need your NRF paperwork (mailed to you) to locate your membership number and information.

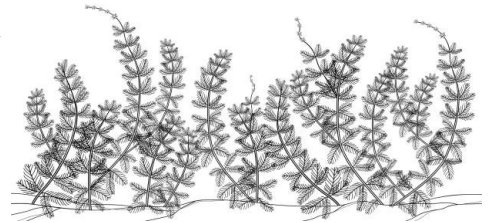


YCC VIRTUAL GATHERING - Wednesday, April 12, 7:30-8:30pm



Tyler Mesalk, DNR Water Resource Specialist, will talk to us about aquatic invasive species general information, ID on common species, steps to slow/prevent contamination, and information on citizen monitoring programs.

Check your email for zoom details.



YOUTH TURKEY HUNT – APRIL 15-16

Wisconsin's annual [Spring Turkey Youth Hunt](#) is designed to give young hunters the opportunity to hunt and gain valuable experience without competing against adults.



Payton, YCC delegate from Clark Co.

The youth hunt is open to resident and non-resident hunters under age 16 who possess a valid spring turkey license, stamp, and harvest authorization. Youth hunters must be accompanied by an adult age 18 or older. All youth hunters must have successfully completed Hunter Education unless they are participating under the Mentored Hunting Program.

Youth hunters can use a harvest authorization for any time period, but they are limited to the turkey management zone for which their authorization was issued. [All other spring turkey hunting regulations apply.](#)

ENROLL IN OUTDOOR SKILL CLASSES

A variety of safety classes are available for registration on the WI DNR website, [GoWild](#).

The easiest way to view available courses is to use the drop down box to choose a course, and set the County as "statewide"

Current courses include:

- Boat, ATV, Snowmobile
- Hunter
- Advanced: Muzzleloader
- Archery
- Trapper

The DNR is also looking for individuals to become [safety instructors](#). Individuals under age 18 can become a [Junior Volunteer Instructor](#).

