

Wisconsin Youth Conservation Congress Update



Photo by: WCC delegate, Jeff Giese

November 2023

YCC delegates and mentors,

The YCC Oversight Committee met last month to plan out programming for the upcoming year. These events are planned for all YCC delegates across the state. Check out details on page six, and make sure to add these dates to your family calendar. Further information will be provided by email as these events approach.

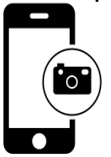
In addition to designated statewide activities, YCC delegates are encouraged to individually participate locally in activities and WCC meetings. Check in with your mentor from time to time to learn more about what is going on in your county.

Newsletters and emails are the best source for current information about upcoming programs and activities. Make sure to read through these correspondences and let me know if you have follow up questions.

I am looking forward to a great year ahead. I hope you all take advantage of your position in the Youth Conservation Congress - amazing opportunities are awaiting!

~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



YCC Delegates in Action



Gabby, YCC delegate from Jefferson Co. caught these two bass in the Crawfish River, Dodge County.



Tommy, YCC delegate from Vilas County squeezed in a day of late fall fishing before freeze up.



Brody, YCC delegate from Racine Co. was successful during bow season, harvesting his first deer by arrow.



Caleb, YCC delegate from St. Croix County was excited to harvest his first pheasant. His dog, Gunner was happy to help!



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: Frank Pratt (715) 699-3974 / fpratt32@gmail.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:

Josh, Columbia County

Lillian, Eau Claire County

Allison, Fond du Lac County



YCC Delegates: Duck Hunting



Evan, YCC delegate from Fond du Lac County spent time with WCC delegate, Reed Kabelowsky duck hunting. They hunted in Oconto County on Lake Michigan and Evan harvested a green-winged teal.

Evan has put in a lot of hours duck hunting this fall. He is pictured here in Oneida County with his dog, holding two buffleheads.

YCC Delegates: Pheasant Stocking

YCC delegate, Mattie from Trempealeau County recently spent time with her mentor, Terri Roehrig. She describes the adventure:

"I got the opportunity to release pheasants with the Mondovi Conservation Club and it was an amazing experience. Pheasants are incredibly beautiful birds and it was awesome to be able to work with them up close. We started out the day by collecting the birds, all of the birds were inside boxes, with six birds in each box. Once we loaded up the truck, we drove to some nearby land to release them and watch them fly into the fields. This experience allowed me to learn a lot more about the habitat and biology of pheasants and I'm incredibly thankful for this learning experience."



Pheasant Hunting

The Wisconsin pheasant season is open through Sunday, Jan. 7, 2024.

The DNR will stock approximately 75,000 pheasants from the state game farm on over 80 properties statewide. Depending on production levels, pheasants are released once before the pheasant hunting season and twice a week for the first two to three weeks of the season. After that, birds are released about once a week until the 9-day gun deer season opens on Nov. 18.

Hunters can use the DNR's [Fields and Forest Lands Interactive Gamebird Hunting Tool \(FFLIGHT\)](#) to locate properties stocked with game farm pheasants. FFLIGHT allows hunters to use aerial maps, topography and measuring tools to identify areas of interest and make their trips more productive and enjoyable.

Pheasant hunters need a valid small game license and a 2023 Pheasant Stamp, which can be purchased through the [Go Wild](#) website or at a license sales location.

Hunters are encouraged to double-check the [legal shooting hours](#) on the properties they intend to hunt and consult the [DNR's hunting rules and regulations](#) before going out.

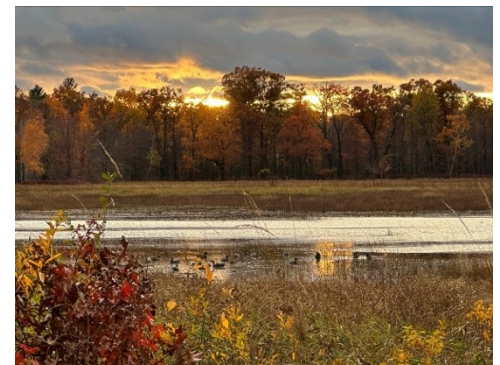
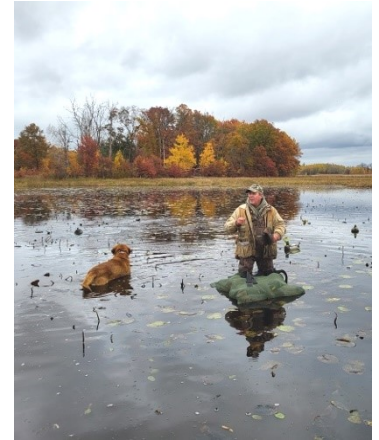
YCC Fall Hunt

Each fall, YCC delegates are offered an opportunity to participate in a bird hunt. This year the hunt was held at Sandhill Wildlife area on October 21-22. WCC delegates served as mentors for the hunt.

On Saturday afternoon, YCC delegates learned about duck hunting strategy, duck identification, duck behavior, and hunting safety. Four groups set up on flowages within Sandhill Wildlife Area. Many participants reported hearing cranes to the north (in the Sandhill refuge) but they didn't see much for duck activity until after shooting hours. The group enjoyed their time, even though no ducks were harvested.

Sunday was a perfect fall morning for spending time in the woods. YCC delegates walked through acres of suitable habitat for grouse and woodcock. One group flushed a few grouse and a woodcock was spotted along the roadside, but no birds were harvested.

It was a great weekend to learn new skills, spend time with friends and enjoy the pure beauty of peak fall colors in Wisconsin.



GET OUT FOR THE HUNT!

The Wisconsin gun-deer season is right around the corner! Do you have plans to hunt?

If you need help finding a mentor to help you hunt or need help finding a location to hunt, please reach out to Kyle. We will connect you with an experienced mentors who can help you learn more about deer hunting and prepare you for a hunt. If you have not completed your hunter safety course, you are still able to participate. You will need to purchase a [mentored-only hunting license](#) and must stay in arms reach of a mentor at all times.



YCC alumni, Abby with her dad, Jason (Vernon Co. WCC delegate)

Share your hunt with us! All YCC delegates who participate in the 2023 deer season will be entered in a drawing to win prizes!

- YCC delegates who harvest a deer - please send a picture of you and your deer.
- YCC delegates who participate in the hunt, but don't harvest a deer - please send an outdoor picture (or selfie) of you taken during deer season wearing your hunting clothes.
- Send photos by December 1st to kyle.zenz@wisconsin.gov or text to 715-299-0925. We will announce prizes at the YCC virtual gathering on Wednesday, December 13th.



YCC alumni, Gavin and YCC delegate, Gabby

YCC PHOTOGRAPHY & OUTDOOR WRITING CONTESTS

All YCC delegates are invited to participate in the annual YCC photography and fall writing contests.

Fall Photography Contest

Submit a photo taken between September 1st and November 30th of an outdoor scene (wildlife, people experiencing nature, hunting or scenery).

Fall Writing Contest

Share a story with us about a unique fall experience. Maybe it was about the big buck that got away, an experience witnessing waterfowl migration, or unique wildlife encounter.

Please send photos or your fall story to kyle.zenz@wisconsin.gov by December 5th. Photos and stories will be posted in the YCC newsletter.



2023 YOUTH DEER HUNT

YCC delegates 15 and under were encouraged to participate in the Wisconsin youth deer hunt, October 7-8. YCC delegates who spent time hunting during the weekend were entered into a drawing to receive prizes. Rob Bohman, WCC chair, donated a solar game camera (won by Emma) and the Wisconsin Outdoor News donated two, 1-year subscriptions to the newspaper (won by Caleb and Brody).



Payton, Clark Co.



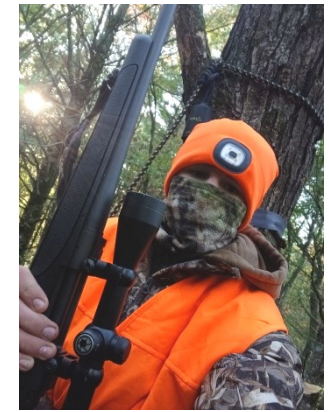
Emma, Chippewa Co.



Caleb, St. Croix Co.



Zachary, Fond du Lac Co.



Brody, Racine Co.

HUNTING INFORMATION

Looking for hunting dates, regulations, hunting locations and more information?

Check out: <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Hunt>

Hunters can explore fall forecasts at the links below:

[2023 Fall Deer Hunting Forecast](#)

[2023 Fall Upland Game Bird Forecast](#)

[2023 Fall Migratory Bird Hunting Forecast](#)

PHOTOGRAPY TIPS FOR CAPTURING A GREAT PHOTO THIS DEER SEASON

Check your background - keep it natural.

Taking a photo of your deer in its natural habitat is best. Emphasize the beauty of the outdoors by avoiding pictures in the back of a pick up truck or in a garage.

Clean up your deer - and you.

Wipe blood from the deer's body, mouth, and nose. If possible, try to face any wounds away from the camera. Check the tongue and make sure it is not showing. Check your own appearance for dirt or blood stains before the photo as well.

Safety first!

If you include your gun or bow in the photo, make sure it is unloaded and pointed in a safe direction.

Find the right angle - get low with your camera.

A picture taken lower to the ground, looking straight towards you and your deer will give the best perspective.

Snap the photo.

Actually, it is a good idea to snap **several** photos from different angles. Frame the photo with the natural background, and make sure not to cut off any part of your body or your deer.

Show your pride - smile in the picture.

Your hard work and skills have paid off! You have had a successful season and you will have meat to share with your family.



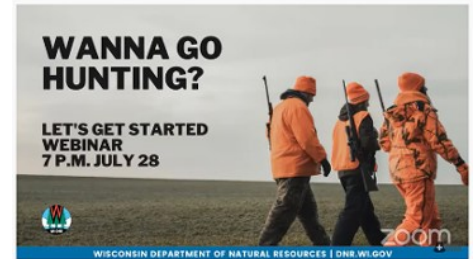
YCC Alumni, Ethan poses for an example of a great hunting photo.

WANNA GO HUNTING? DNR HUNTING WEBINAR SERIES

The series is designed for those interested in learning about hunting, fishing and trapping. Each episode features guest speakers sharing their experiences getting started with hunting and includes discussions addressing common challenges faced by those new to hunting, fishing or trapping.

Wanna Go Hunting Series:

- [Let's Get Started!](#)
- [What Can We Hunt?](#)
- [Where Can We Hunt?](#)
- [Where can we practice shooting?](#)
- [Who Can We Learn From?](#)



Follow the [DNR YouTube](#) channel to learn more.

CERTIFICATES FOR YOUR FIRST HARVEST OR FIRST EXPERIENCE



The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources encourages hunters of all ages to celebrate their first hunt with a free first harvest and first hunting experience certificate.

To obtain a certificate, visit the [first certificate page on the DNR website](#) and select which species or experience to celebrate. Hunters can submit a photograph of their special moment as well as details about the experience, including when and where the animal was harvested. All information will be displayed on the free, customized certificate to help mark the occasion.

RADIO COLLARED DEER ARE LEGAL TO HARVEST DURING HUNTING SEASON



During the hunting season, hunters may spot deer that are equipped with radio collars. Collared deer are part of a mortality study in the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and are legal to hunt with a standard Wisconsin hunting license and harvest authorization.

Licensing and harvest regulations apply to collared deer, just as they do to uncollared deer. Anyone who harvests a collared deer is asked to call the number on the collar so that a crew member can retrieve it. The number to call is 608-935-1940.

YCC Upcoming Opportunities

NOVEMBER

- Nov. 8 - YCC virtual gathering, 7:30-8:30 pm. Discussion about duck decoys and duck research.
- Nov. 18 - 26 - Wisconsin gun-deer season.

DECEMBER

- Dec 13 - YCC virtual gathering, 7:30-8:30 pm. Learn about Sturgeon Spearfishing in Wisconsin, Margaret Stadig, WDNR.

JANUARY

- Jan. 10 - YCC virtual gathering, 7:30-8:30 pm. Learn about taxidermy.
- Jan. 20 - YCC ice fishing event, Lake Onalaska.
- Jan. 20-21 - Free fishing weekend in Wisconsin.

SAVE THE DATE

- March 9, YCC Oversight Committee meeting and YCC program at UW-Stevens Point.
- May 11-13, WCC Convention, Appleton.
- June 22, YCC career day field trip.
- August 8-11, YCC Summer Program.
- August, Volunteer at the Youth Zone - Waterfowl Hunter's Expo, Oshkosh.
- October 5-6, YCC Oversight Committee meeting, YCC Learn to Hunt pheasants at Poynette.

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/StateNaturalAreas/volunteer>
- DNR State Park System volunteer information: <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/parks/volunteer>

YCC VIRTUAL GATHERING -

Duck decoys & research

Wednesday, November 8, 7:30-8:30pm



We are pleased to have presentations from our own YCC delegate, Evan Casper, and YCC alumni, Sarah Hougard. Evan will be sharing his experience creating realistic waterfowl decoys. Evan enjoys making decoys and has entered and placed in several decoy contests. He will talk about the process to make a decoy, and provide tips for beginners. Sarah Hougard will discuss her summer job through UW-Stevens Point participating in duck research. Sarah will share photos of her experience, discuss research objectives, methods, and talk about overall lessons learned.

Watch your email for details and a zoom link.

DEER HUNTER OBSERVATION SURVEY

To gain a better understanding of the relative abundance and distribution of deer and other mammalian/avian wildlife species in the state, the DNR is developing a long-term database of deer hunter observation data. Past efforts have provided the agency with valuable information for managing many wildlife species

The survey period is open through January 7th. You can help with this survey by recording the following from your deer hunting trips:

- date hunted
- number of hours hunted
- county
- zone (map)
- land type
- weather conditions
- type and number of animals observed



Data can be reported by a mobile device, desktop or by mail.

Learn more about the observation survey:

<https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/WildlifeHabitat/wlsurvey.html>

DNR SAFETY COURSES

Hunter/archery education safety classes are being held across the state. Search for classes near you: <https://gowild.wi.gov/customers/safetiedclass>

