



The MI Marsh Chatter



Michigan Ducks Unlimited Newsletter

2nd Quarter - Summer 2021

Ducks Unlimited conserves, restores, and manages wetlands and associated habitats for North America's waterfowl. These habitats also benefit other wildlife and people.

A Word from our Chairman

Tracy Oberleiter: 2021 - 2022 State Chairman



It's great to be back in the swing of things. Most of our chapters are planning in person banquets and events and some are still hosting virtual auctions and raffles. Even better, some are planning both. Michigan Ducks Unlimited recently hosted a Virtual Gun Frenzy in conjunction with an in-person Gun Bash with the Monroe Chapter and it turned out to be a great event, offering over 60 guns, Yeti Coolers, cash and other great prizes. Hopefully we will do more of these combined events in the future as it allows everyone to participate. Another great example of an in-person banquet was the Paw Paw Chapter Banquet on June 24th. It was a sold-out room with a great selection

of Ducks Unlimited merchandise and special edition guns. I was able to attend this banquet and found everyone having a great time and enjoying being able to get together once again. Check out the listing of upcoming events by visiting ducks.org/michigan and come join us.

Michigan Ducks Unlimited continues to offer training and assistance to all our chapter volunteers and will be hosting a Leadership Day at the Isabella County Sportsman's Club in July. This event offers best practices, new fundraising ideas and the importance of strong volunteer recruitment activities in our communities. If you're not already a committee volunteer and would like to become one, now would be a great time to join us. Please call Dean Noble our Recruitment Chairman at 989-414-0981 to see how easy it is to become involved.

Our biologist, engineers and conservation staff have also been hard at work continuing the mission of Ducks Unlimited. On August 7th we will be dedicating the Sturgeon River Sloughs State Wildlife Management Area Project in Baraga and Houghton counties in the Keweenaw Peninsula. The Sloughs are one of the Upper Peninsula's most productive wetland areas. At this event we will be recognizing all of the conservation partners and major donors that made this impressive project possible.

A shout out is in order to promote attending the 2021 Ducks Unlimited 84th National Convention in New Orleans on September 8-12, 2021. This is a great experience showcasing Ducks Unlimited impact on North America's conservation progress and future plans. If you have not attended one in the past, I suggest you give it a try this year. Check it out by visiting convention.ducks.org.

Thanks to our volunteers, major donors and supporters for all you do in supporting our Ducks Unlimited mission. See you soon at our next local event.

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Ducks Unlimited National Convention



Join us in New Orleans, September 8-12, 2021, for DU's 84th Annual Convention!

We are excited to invite you to DU's 84th National Convention in New Orleans, Louisiana September 8-11, 2021! COVID has kept us away from enjoying the company of our DU friends, but with vaccinations up and cases down, we welcome you to join us in New Orleans!

All the staples of a DU National convention are back – tours, hospitality and the gala! We are kicking it off right with a Louisiana Roadkill Cookoff on Wednesday evening. Below are helpful tabs for you to view the brochure, register and pre-purchase merchandise. Should you have any questions please let me know or contact Elizabeth Harris at eharris@ducks.org or at (901) 758-3843.

Stay well and get ready, the Big Easy is calling!

Pattie Kempka
Director of National Meetings and Conferences
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[BROCHURE](#)

[REGISTRATION](#)

[MERCHANDISE](#)



Michigan Regional Directors



KEVIN STOLTZ
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Kevin Stoltz grew up in the beautiful upper peninsula where he graduated from West Iron County H.S. in 1988. He attended Ferris State University where he received his BS in Business Management in 1993.

Kevin spent most of his early career with JCPenney and was promoted into numerous General Manager positions. Having moved all around northern lower Michigan, he developed an appreciation for the area and all it offers. Kevin formally started with DU on October 26, '20 and is thrilled to be on board!

Kevin has been married to his lovely wife, Kristy, for 27 years and they have 7 children ranging from 24 to 2 years old. They also have been blessed with two grandchildren!

In his spare time, Kevin loves to spend time in the outdoors camping with his family, teaching his children about hunting and fishing, and simply soaking in a good sunset!



MARTIN ANDERSON
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Martin Anderson was asked to join his local committee in Fayette County, Georgia after attending DU events for over ten years. In 2012 he went to work for DU as a Regional Director and has worked in California and Missouri before moving to Michigan in the Fall of 2020. Working with DU volunteers is a privilege according to Martin, and he really enjoys the incredible people you meet through Ducks Unlimited.

Martin is an avid bird hunter and enjoys shooting clay targets and working with his Labrador Retriever. His favorite place to hunt waterfowl is in North Dakota, freelancing the prairie pothole region.

Martin grew up in Fayetteville, Georgia and attended Georgia Southern University in Statesboro, Georgia earning a BBA in Marketing.



CRAIG CURTIS
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The outdoors has always been part of Craig Curtis' life. Craig grew up in Paw Paw, Michigan where his family had a farm. His daily chores included raising livestock and row crops. When time permitted, he was hunting ducks, geese, and deer.

His passion for Ducks Unlimited started over 27 years ago as a volunteer for the Paw Paw Chapter. He applied and was hired in October of 2005 as the Regional Director for Southwest Michigan Ducks Unlimited.

Craig is a graduate of Western Michigan University with a B.S. in History. He has been in sales for his entire working career. He has been married to his wife, Jennifer for 29 years and have 2 daughters that enjoy hunting and fishing as well. Of course, his main hobby is waterfowling, but Craig enjoys all aspects of being outdoors.



CHRIS ANDERSON
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Chris attended Michigan Technological University from 1995 – 2000 and has a Bachelor of Science (BS) degree in Biological and Physical Sciences.

A devoted outdoorsman, Chris worked for the US Forest Service and US Fish and Wildlife Service for 7 years as a Wildland Firefighter. He worked on fire crews for US Forest on fire crews for US Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, and US Fish and Wildlife Service. Served multiple leadership positions including Squad Boss, Engine Boss, and Sawyer on several crews including the Flathead Hotshot Crew, an elite Type1 Fire suppression team.

Chris joined the Ducks Unlimited team, as a Regional Director, in the spring of 2002. He has 3 boys and 1 daughter and was a high school Biology teacher at West Iron County in the UP.



Duck Calling Contest



Monroe Ducks Unlimited and Pointe Mouillee Waterfowl Festival have joined forces to present a "Live Duck" Calling Contest.

The Pointe Mouillee Waterfowl Festival is being held September 18th & September 19th at the DNR site, 37205 Mouillee Road, Brownstown Charter Township, Michigan. For more information about the festival go to www.ptemouilleewaterfowlfestival.org

The Duck Calling Contest will be held on September 18th at 10 am.
Registration is also Sept. 18th from 9 am to 9:45 am.

Prizes just for entering! Top prizes in 2 person and 1 person contests!

This isn't a "Main Street Contest, this isn't a "Meat Contest," This is a contest for everyone!

Open Live Duck (Main Event)

Open to all callers \$40 entry fee.

1st and grand prize are \$500.00, Plaque and PMWF Hat

2nd place \$40.00, Plaque and PMWF Hat

3rd Plaque and a hat

The contest will follow the Open Two Man Live Duck.

Open two Man Live Duck

Open to all callers. \$60 per team entry fee.

Limit of two teams per person, per each calling event.

1st for the Open Two Man Live Duck is \$500.00. Plaque and PMWF Hat

2nd \$40.00, Plaque and PMWF Hat

3rd Plaque and PMWF Hat

Prizes (For all contests):

- 1st place: 1st place plaque
- 2nd place: 2nd place plaque
- 3rd place: 3rd place plaque

Reader Contributions

In the last newsletter I asked for your contributions in the way of stories, pictures, recipes etc. Bernie Engels sent me these beautiful pictures. Many of the pictures were taken from his float blind. Thank you so much, Bernie! Please send me your submissions to jan.mcdu@yahoo.com. Thanks, Jan



Taken from my float blind. It's a great way to get close to wildfowl without spooking them.

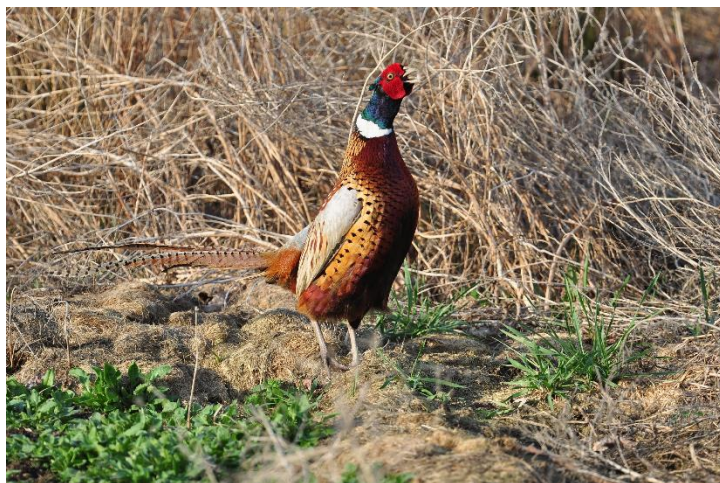
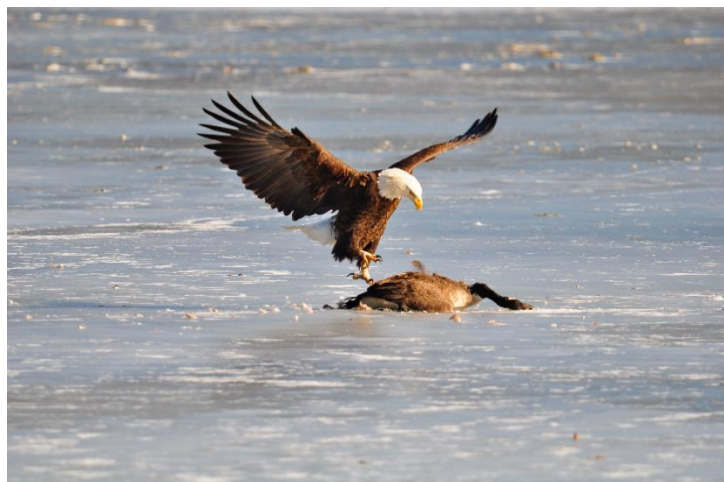
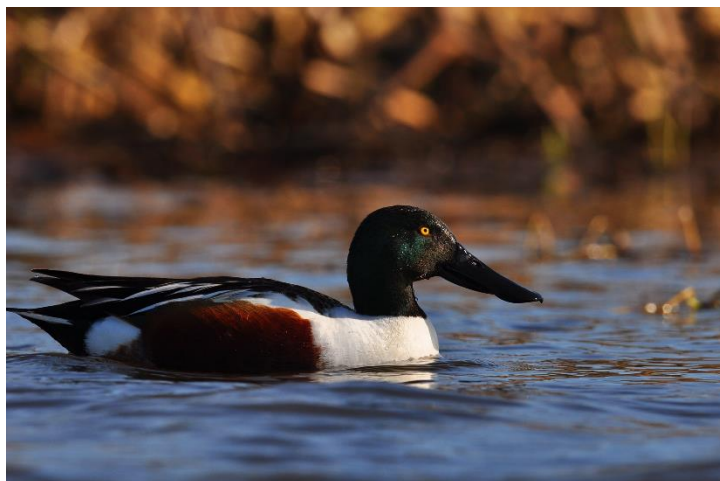
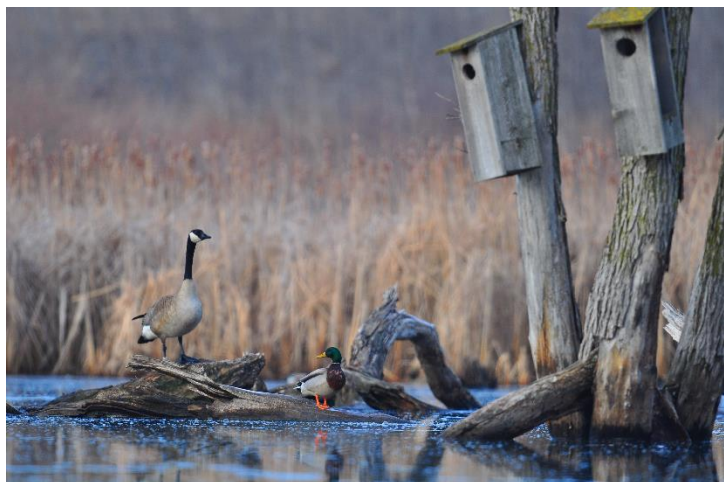
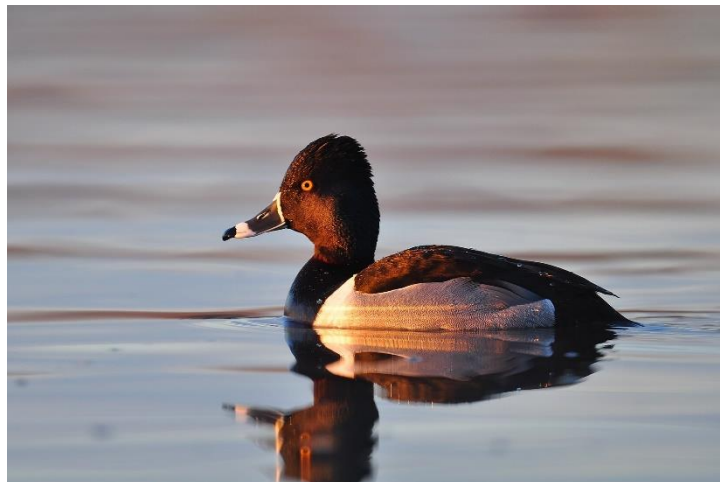


Image of a pheasant crowing in springtime on a restored prairie near Holland.



This adult eagle did not kill this goose, but is actually scavenging, which they often do during the winter in the northern states.



The ring necked duck was also from my float blind on a beautiful spring morning.

MICHIGAN WATERFOWL HUNTING STAMP COLLECTION

(REPRINT – Submitted by Chris Sebastian)



This complete set of Michigan Duck Stamps was donated to Ducks Unlimited by Bob and Judy Bissonnette of Hale, Michigan.

The Michigan Duck Stamp Program was established in 1976 and has become an icon for waterfowl hunters and wetland conservation enthusiasts. During the past 39 years the program has gained popularity with collectors and conservation groups throughout the United States.

The Michigan Duck Hunters Association coordinated the Michigan waterfowl stamp program in partnership with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. Purchasing Michigan waterfowl stamps and prints helps to ensure continued conservation of wetlands and waterfowl habitat.

Bob Bissonnette has been an active member of Ducks Unlimited since 1973. He retired from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources in 1997 after 26 years as manager of the DNR's Nyanquing Point State Wildlife Area. He's actively collected and helped manage the state duck stamp program both during and after his DNR career.

To learn more about the Michigan Waterfowl Stamp Program and supporting conservation efforts Michigan through the purchase of limited edition signed and numbered prints and collector's edition stamps, visit, www.michigan.gov/waterfowl.

UPDATE: (From Sarah McCallum, Senior Director of Gift Planning)

Bob & Judy Bissonnette visited GLARO on June 30th, 2021, and brought the 2021 Michigan Duck Stamp print to add to the collection.



for



Paw Paw Dinner Event: June 24th

Planning and hard work paid off for the Paw Paw DU team with a full house of about 270 people. Attendees enjoyed a great evening of delicious food, entertainment, and of course, supporting the DUCKS! Local business sponsors and individuals alike expressed their joy at getting together again. Since 1987, the Paw Paw chapter has raised more than \$800,000.00 for Ducks Unlimited.



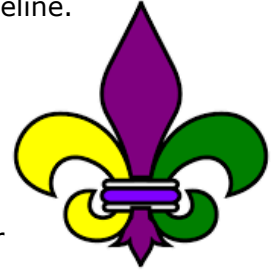
Recipes

DUCK GUMBO

Get in the spirit of this year's **Ducks Unlimited National Convention** with this Louisiana classic! As with any gumbo recipe, exact measurements are not required or encouraged, but are provided here merely as a general guideline.

Cooking Time: 3 hours

Serves: 12 to 15



Ingredients

1/2 cup vegetable oil
8 duck breast fillets, skin on or off, diced into 1- to 2-inch pieces
Salt and pepper
1 1/2 cups each chopped celery, onion, and peppers
4-6 cloves garlic, minced
2 quarts chicken stock
3 bay leaves
1/2 teaspoon each cayenne pepper, onion powder, and garlic powder

2 teaspoons filé powder
1 cup flour
2 cups sliced fresh or frozen okra
1 pound andouille sausage, sliced
2 pounds shrimp (peeled, deveined, and preferably wild-caught)
1 cup seeded and finely diced tomatoes
Warm cooked rice
Hot sauce
Green onions, sliced

Directions

Step 1 - Heat 1/4 cup of the oil in a heavy pot over medium heat. Season the duck liberally with salt and pepper and add it to the pot. Cook, stirring often, until the duck pieces are evenly browned. Add celery, onion, peppers, and garlic. Cook, stirring often, for 10 minutes.

Step 2 - Add chicken stock, bay leaves, cayenne pepper, onion powder, garlic powder, and filé powder. Bring to a boil and reduce heat to low. Cover pot and simmer until duck pieces are very tender, about 2 hours. While simmering, heat remaining oil in a small pot. Whisk in flour and cook, stirring constantly, until mixture (roux) is chocolate brown but not burnt. If the roux burns, start over. Once the roux reaches chocolate color, remove it from the heat and transfer to a heat-safe container. Allow to cool completely.

Step 3 - Once the duck pieces are very tender, whisk in cooled roux. Add okra and sausage, then cook, stirring often, for 15 minutes. Toss in shrimp and tomatoes, and cook until shrimp turns pink. Adjust seasonings to taste. Serve in bowls with rice and hot sauce. Garnish with green onions.



DUCK BACON

Duck bacon is simple to prepare in a smoker or oven. Once the short curing process is complete, it can be used much like any other bacon. Refrigerate for up to one week. For longer storage, wrap carefully and freeze for up to a year. Save this recipe for fattier puddle ducks, not divers or leaner ducks and geese. Mallards, pintails, gadwalls, and black ducks are all great for making bacon.

Ingredients

- 6 duck breast fillets, skin intact
- 1 cup kosher salt
- 1 tablespoon pink curing salt (Prague Powder #1 or Insta Cure #1)
- 3/4 cup dark brown sugar



- 2 tablespoons crushed black peppercorns
- 2 tablespoons fresh or used coffee grounds

Directions

Step 1 - In a bowl, combine kosher salt with pink curing salt, brown sugar, peppercorns, and coffee grounds. Mix thoroughly.

Step 2 - Using a fork, perforate only the skin (not the meat) of each fillet a few times.

Step 3 - Rub the mixture into all surfaces of the meat. Place in a zip-top bag and refrigerate for 12 hours, turning the bag over every couple of hours.

Step 4 - Remove fillets from the bag and rinse well with cold water. Pat dry. Arrange fillets on a rack with a pan underneath to catch any drippings and place in the refrigerator for two to three hours to air dry.

Step 5 - Smoke at low temperature (under 150 degrees) or bake in a 200-degree oven with the door open about 1/2 inch (use a ball of foil to keep the door ajar) for one hour. Cool completely.

Step 6 - Slice fillets into thin strips and fry as you would other bacon. To make slicing easier, place the fillets in the freezer for an hour or so before slicing.

Use duck bacon as you would conventional pork bacon.

Have a recipe to share?

**Please send it to Jan Marra at
jan.mcd�@yahoo.com**

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Volunteer Spotlight



Brad Harding / Bay City Chapter

Whenever Brad Harding is called upon to help with additional tasks, he's always willing to jump in. Recently, the Saginaw Bay Chapter held a Gun Frenzy and there were quite a few tickets remaining to reach a sell-out. Brad was asked if he'd help sell the remaining tickets personally to his contacts and he knocked it out of the park! With the help of the other chapter members, the event sold out and was a huge success! Thanks, Brad, for your commitment to DU!!

Craig Lesley / Huron Valley DU Chapter

The Huron Valley DU chapter hosted an in-person event on June 10th. The Area Chairman, Craig Lesley, and his committee did a great job, and everyone had a smile on their face. The attendees enjoyed several raffles, the plinko game, plus a silent and live auction. The attendees were very generous in their support of Ducks Unlimited. The evening featured great fellowship with cold beverages and plus a delicious meal.

Michigan DU is thankful for the leadership Craig Lesley has shown as Area Chairman over the past four years and for his ten years of dedication to DU as a volunteer. He and his volunteer committee are a valuable part of the Michigan DU Team and we appreciate their efforts to hold this event.



This event was the first in person event in the region and it really was fun seeing people gather to support DU and all the smiles on their faces. I would like to thank the committee and Craig for a job well done, it was a great night for the attendees and the ducks. And to everyone that attended and supported this event, thank you, we look forward to seeing you again soon

Do you know someone that should be recognized?

Please send their story and a picture to Jan Marra at jan.mcd�@yahoo.com

Be part of the next Marsh Chatter!

You don't have to be a professional, just share your loves!

Hi Everyone,

Please don't forget! I'd like to include as much as possible from the marsh-grass roots of Ducks Unlimited; YOU. Your work, your achievements, and your fun times too. We all want the wonderful results that the Ducks Unlimited organization makes possible, but let's not forget the folks whose fundraising, and conservation efforts lay the ground work of possibilities. Go to www.ducks.org and to www.ducks.org/michigan to read how your hard work made those possibilities become reality.

For the newsletter I'm looking for:

- Pictures: Events, Committee Activities & DU friends
- Pictures: Working dogs at their best, wildlife, stunning scenery and of course, ducks!
- Nominate someone for the "People to Know" spot.
- Recipes: Fish and Game
- Fun Stories: Hunting, fishing and DU!

Please send them to me at jan.mcdu@yahoo.com

Thank you in advance!

Jan Marra

March Chatter Editor



Photo courtesy of David Bowers