

A Traditional Bowhunting Organization

United Bowhunters of Illinois

Volume 21, Issue 4

Winter 2016



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The UBI newsletter is published quarterly by the United Bowhunters of Illinois. Opinions expressed are those of the author and not necessarily those of the UBI.

If you would like to have an article, letter, photograph or other item published in the newsletter, send it to the editor.

All MS Windows based PC programs/formats can be used. All materials submitted become the property of the United Bowhunters of Illinois and we reserve the right to edit or reject any material submitted.

PUBLICATION DEADLINES: Spring Edition, January 1st - Summer Edition, April 1st - Fall Edition, July 1st - Winter Edition, October 1st.

Commercial advertising rates: Per Issue Ads, Full Page - \$40, ½ Page - \$30, ¼ Page - \$20, Business Card Special \$10 for 4 issues

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President's Report - Jim Ellis

By the time you read this, the deer hunting season will be over, and I hope everyone had a safe and successful season. Banquet Chairman Jerry Gille and the UBI Board of Directors are working to put together a great banquet for UBI members. It's an honor to have Gene Wensel as the guest speaker. Jerry will have more in his report about the upcoming banquet.

Things have been fairly quiet during the hunting season. The Nature Conservancy asked UBI to send a letter supporting renewal of the Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), which I did. Representative LaHood is against renewing the LWCF siding with the Farm Bureau. The US Congress created the LWCF in 1965 using revenues from offshore oil and gas to support conservation of natural resources, safeguard natural areas, and provide recreation opportunities.

I was very saddened to hear about the passing of Jim Garcia. Jim was a long time UBI member and supporter. You could always count on seeing him at the banquet. Jim was very active in conservation groups around the Quad City area. Jim will be missed!

With the deer herd in my area on the rebound from EHD I had a great bow season. The number of deer I saw from the stand is still not what it was prior to the two years of EHD, but it's coming back. I got lucky and killed a nice 9 pointer in early November. On one of my afternoon hunts, I heard two bucks sparring not far from my stand location. I pulled out my rattling antlers, and I tried to imitate the sound of their sparring. It didn't take long for the first buck to show up, a nice 2 1/2 year old deer. Following about 30 yards behind him was the second buck. At this deer was coming in, the first one was working a scrape below me. The 9 pointer passed within 8 yards, and I could not get a good shot at him as he walked right by me. He kept walking and went 50 yards down the trail where he started scraping and working tree limbs. Seeing him all worked up, I picked up one of my rattling antler and tickled it against the other while hanging on the limb. I then grunted softly. The buck looked up and here he comes back. He walked right in, and I shot him at 5



yards. He ran maybe 60 yards before piling up dead. It is a great feeling to harvest a mature deer the old way, using a longbow, wood arrows, knowing your hunting area, and a few skills learned from years of time spent in the woods.

This hunting season I lost an old friend. For the last five seasons my old friend would slip by me at least a couple of times. My old friend was the White Nose Doe. This deer was distinct because her face was white or piebald. The white patch of hair started at her nose and went up between her eyes and down both sides of her face. This season I had her twice at eight yards, and I refused to shoot. She was very recognizable to me. I was always thrilled to see her in the spring and each fall. I learned from a friend that the neighboring group of gun hunters killed her. They shoot first and ask questions when the smoke clears.

Hope to see everyone at the banquet.



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Director's Report - Denny Hayford

Stump Shoot 2016

March will be on us before you know it and that means it will be time for the annual Stump Shoot. This event has been slowly gaining participation. It falls at that restless time of the year when deer season is over and your turkey permit dates are coming up. It's a great time to limber up that bow and retune for the coming encounter with the feathered phantom. Camping is available on Friday and Saturday nights, and there will be a potluck Saturday afternoon. See the flyer in this addition of the newsletter.

Scholarship Fund

I did not receive any requests for the scholarship fund this year. The fund will carry over till to the 2016 budget.

Request for assistance

We have had one request for assistance with an NASP program at St. Mathews School in Champaign, Ill. I will be in contact with them to determine eligibility before requesting a vote from the education committee. As of this writing I have not heard back from my attempt to contact this school.



Banners

Gilbert Best contacted me about the banners after reading in the last newsletter that we were trying to track down the ones that were missing. He still had one from his time as Region 4 rep and now that he has once again taken on that role he will remain in charge of that one. We are still looking at purchasing a few more banners. I have checked only one place and was surprised at the cost. If anyone knows of a company they have worked with in the past I could use some help getting prices. The banners are about 60" long by 30" wide. We are looking at maybe 2 or 3 more. Any help would be appreciated.

Deer season is winding down just as the weather is beginning to act like winter. I was beginning to think we would have a mild end of season hunt but maybe not some much. I am encouraged by the number of deer I saw this season and hope the mild temperatures didn't set back the recovery of our herd. I for one spent more time in the woods this year and most all of it without a shiver. I can't remember that happening before. I was thankful to take a very mature buck with my 60 lb. Jeffery's bow. The rack was dwarfed by the 235 lb. body of this magnificent animal. I have seldom seen such massive neck and shoulders. He was truly built to do battle with the best of them.

I hope your season was a memorable one..... in a good way of course. Looking forward to seeing everyone at the banquet this year.

Be safe, hunt hard, shoot straight.....

Best Regards,

Denny Hayford

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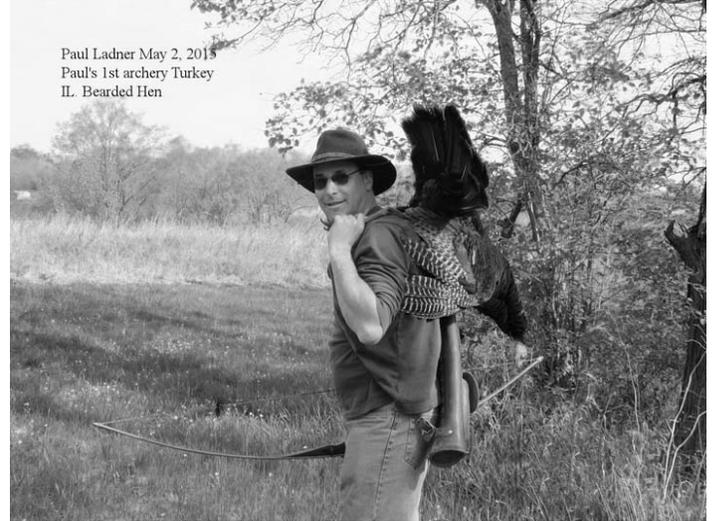
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Director's Report - Paul Ladner

The news for the UBI centers on the upcoming banquet. I am sure there will be coverage of that elsewhere. Plan to attend, donate items and bid at the banquet auction. This is your organizations annual fundraiser. Invite your family or a guest to enjoy the events and maybe become a member.

Other than the banquet I have little to report. My mind has been occupied with hunting (and work, family... when I have been home). Even though I came home from this falls hunts with more memories and unused tags than venison it was great to be outdoors with traditional hunting friends. I had my opportunities but the object of my pursuit eluded my efforts except for one hapless Illinois doe so far. I hope everyone's season has been enjoyable as mine.



Paul Ladner May 2, 2015
Paul's 1st archery Turkey
IL. Bearded Hen

Director's Report - Jerry Gille

You should get this newsletter right about the time of our annual banquet in Springfield. The Board has been working diligently on banquet plans. This is our primary fundraising opportunity for the year - which is how we fund our operations. I encourage all of you to attend and bring donations with you! The Board can only do so much to make this event a success. Ultimately, it's up to the entire membership. Thanks for your support and I hope to see everyone there.

We have some good seminars lined up for the banquet. We will also be conducting our membership meeting on Saturday afternoon. Make plans to show up and let your voice be heard concerning your UBI.

By the time this newsletter arrives in your mailbox Illinois' deer season will have concluded. I hope each of you had an opportunity to make a lasting memory or two as a result. I saw more deer this year when compared to the last few years but I don't necessarily concede that this means anything at all. An increase in deer sightings for one year doesn't exactly constitute a trend. I guess we'll see what happens in the next few years with the Illinois deer herd. I've heard of a couple guys having success so far this year including Jim Ellis killing a nice buck. Congratulations to all those successful bowhunters out there!

If you weren't successful in killing a deer with your bow this year, you are not alone. The success rate for traditional archers is dismal compared to all other user groups out there. That's kind of the whole point of why we do what we do - to limit our take while maximizing the effort. This approach obviously doesn't resonate

with the masses, game departments or law makers. But I believe it makes perfect sense to the non-hunting public. As process hunting traditionalists I think it is our duty to promote our historical, and now unique, approach to killing at every turn. We don't have to be cocky or arrogant about it, but if we do not get our message out to the right groups we will forever remain irrelevant.

Best of luck to all those turkey bowhunters out there. This will be the first spring in a few years that I am not recovering from a shoulder surgery or two. Although my shoulders are far from perfect, I plan to show Ellis how to kill a spring gobbler with a long-bow this year!

Jerry Gille
217-455-3453



Director's Report - Peter Tarcha

In my last report, as Chair of the Conservation Committee, I mentioned that the working document /job description of the Committee would be found in the Fall 2015 issue. Because of an oversight, that did not happen; hence the document is attached to the end of this report. We have no UBI members from regions 4 & 5 on the committee. I encourage anyone who has an interest in the committee, especially from the unrepresented regions, see me at the banquet, February 6, 2016, or contact me by e-mail: cozzi216@comcast.net.

This year the Committee selected Marc Folder, from Region 5, Conservation Police Officer of the Year. This award will be presented at the upcoming banquet. Officer Folden made a significant impact in support of ethical hunting in Illinois by investigating and successfully citing a non-compliant outfitter, a non-resident, taking multiple deer on resident tags, and issued numerous citations for baiting, shining, and other game violations.

Direct one-on-one surveys of CPO's and a one State Park supervisor from Lake and McHenry counties, regarding unmet needs for enforcement equipment, indicated a universal deficiency of trail cameras. At the time of this writing the Committee had not made a final decision on the mix of specific equipment, but we generally agree that one of the items will be a real time data-transmitting camera equipped with a lock box. IDNR has indicated that theft of trail cameras has been an issue. So the lock box and the instantaneous data transmission will be additional barriers to thieves and violators.

The Board received a request from the Illinois Nature Conservancy for a letter supporting their request for funds from the Land Water Conservation Fund. Created by Congress in 1965, the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) was a bipartisan commitment to safeguard natural areas, water resources and our cultural heritage, and to provide recreation opportunities to all Americans. By a vote of 4-to-2 the Board agreed to provide a letter of support. At our December 22, 2015 board meeting we decided to invite the Illinois Nature Conservancy to set up a table at our February 6, 2016 meeting and perhaps send a speaker to our next banquet meeting in 2017. The Conservancy supports land preservation and management using sound science. They do allow limited hunting at two of their Illinois sites, namely the Emiquon and Grassy Slough Preserves. Their rules are consistent with Illinois game laws. I am sure your Board will seek to identify common interests and partner where appropriate to amplify our voices.

The site below will take you directly to the Nature Conservancy pages regarding hunting.

<http://www.nature.org/ourinitiatives/regions/northamerica/unitedstates/illinois/hunting-in-illinois.xml>

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* Friday Night Coon Shoot

* Saturday Evening shoot Down with Cash Pay Back

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E-Mail: CCCVendor@gmail.com

Phone: (317) 902-6295

General Information: Jim Voyles (765) 342-3047 - Eric Voyles (765) 349-1326

Registration Ends Sunday at 10:30 am - Scorecards In By Sunday at 1:30 pm

Awards Program Sunday at 2:00 pm

Visit The New UBI Website at -

<http://www.unitedbowhuntersofillinois.org>



UBI Board Meeting 12-22-15

Attendance (meeting was conference call): Jerry Gille, Peter Tarcha, Denny Hayford, Paul Ladner, Jim Ellis, Devlin Neuhaus.

Treasurers Report: None

Insurance Status: No update

501-C3 Status: No update

Membership Status: No update

Newsletter: No update

Regional Representatives: Region 4: Need to update web site. Discussion was made regarding inviting the region reps to attend board meetings so they are up to date on events. Decided invite will be extended. Please include in further email notifications.

IFOR: No update

Conservation Committee: Peter wants to introduce committee members, explain what committee does and have the floor for a bit at member meeting. Having a projector was requested. Peter will contact the IDNR re: invite distinguished guests including conservation award recipient, DNR director Rosenthal and Paul Shelton.

Education Committee: Denny will chair. Responsibilities include: NASP and other youth group requests will be evaluated and grants given as budget allows. Awarding of any scholarships. Organize State Fair archery tent financial assistance (\$500 in past) and volunteers.

Legislative Committee: No update

Other Business: End of season hunt dates and details? Denny questioned if UBI could help with purchase of mower for groundskeeper at summer shoot location. Cost was determined to be likely prohibitive, but Denny may look into costs.

Banquet planning : This was basically the content of the entire meeting. Jerry Gille ran the meeting and used planner he had emailed earlier as outline.

Hopefully the banquet flyer will be in the mail to all very soon. Jerry to forward the final version to the board.

Room for Col. Bree (auctioneer) and gift certificate for same was discussed. Jim to contact Sonny to get it done.

Jerry mentioned photography at the banquet. If someone wants to be photographer, that would be nice, but if all board members take a few pix on phones and forward some to Michael Wiltse for inclusion in newsletter it may be sufficient.

UBI banners and sign boards were discussed.

Jerry will make sure projectors available in the meeting rooms.

Credit card payments discussed with some mention of getting a smart phone swiper. Non in attendance are very familiar unfortunately but it was generally agreed to be something to look into. Jerry will do as time allows.

Raffle packages were discussed with options ranging from Lone Wolf, Big Dog or screaming Eagle stands to binoculars and chain saw. Seemed consensus that screaming Eagle could cut us a pretty good deal on a stand and that we would use that for raffle.

Denny and Jim will be available to help with dealer set up Friday night as Jerry won't be there until 6PM or so.

All were encouraged to make contacts for auction items. Certain people committed to specific contacts, but I didn't catch them all. We will run a business card size ad in the newsletter for any donors who desire.

Bows, general raffle and bucket raffles were discussed. Devlin volunteered to run the bucket raffle.

Dinner invite and gifts for speakers and outgoing board members was discussed. Hatchet for outgoing Pres. Mike Davenport and knives for P. Shelton and outgoing board members, Mitchell, Gage, & Mooney.

Bernard Swank will be asked to help as caller for auction.

Pick of litter and card raffles were discussed, but decided to firmly decide that day once all donations are accounted for. It was generally agreed that the card raffle should be held during dinner or just after and before the auction so as not to take a break and disrupt the auction flow.

Hospitality room arrangements were discussed.

Possibly inviting someone from the nature conservancy to our banquet and providing them with a table for display or even as a speaker in the future was discussed.

These notes are a bit haphazard and assume I caught most everything discussed. I am sure notes were taken by others who have certain responsibilities for the banquet.

Thanks Brad for the use of conference call system.

Region 1 Spring Stump Shoot

April 16, 2016

Come one, come all to the Region 1 Spring Stump Shoot! It will be held at Denny Hayford's property in north western McLean County. Weather permitting there will be primitive camping available, a warming fire, bow bird shooting, target trail, and all the hunting stories you can tell.

A pot-luck meal will follow the shooting on Saturday afternoon. If you are coming in on Friday and camping please let us know. The weather will play a big role in what we will be able to do but we will HAVE FUN.

Bring field points, blunts, and Flu Flus!

Directions from Rt 150: Take county rd 1650E south (west side of Congerville, go about 2.25 miles) to 2050N. Turn right and go about a qtr. mile. Look for the UBI sign on the left hand side of the road.

Directions from Rt. 9: Take the Danvers Y turn off into Danvers. Take Old Peoria Road west to 250 East Rd (right turn – watch closely or you will miss it). Go about 2.5 miles to 2050 N and turn left (right turn will land you in the creek). Go qtr. mile and look for UBI sign on the left.

Note: 250 E and 1650 N are the same road depending on which county you are in?!?!

Contact Denny Hayford @ 309-840-2327 for more information.

Come Join Us at the 2016
United Bowhunters of Illinois Annual Banquet
Saturday February 6

At the Northfield Inn and Conference Center
3280 Northfield Drive, Springfield, IL 62702

Featuring Guest Speaker Gene Wensel

Twins brothers Gene and Barry Wensel were born in 1944, on opening day of bow season, in DuBois, Pennsylvania. They were raised in the hills of Vermont, later graduating from college in Indiana. With their respective families, they were residents of Montana for almost thirty years before moving to rural Iowa in 1999.

Gene has hunted with recurves and longbows for over fifty years. He has been affiliated with the Professional Bowhunters Society, the Pope & Young Club, the Boone & Crockett Club, QDMA, NRA, etc.

Gene is a founder of the Montana Bowhunters Association and a Life member of the NRA. He is a regular contributor to multiple magazines. Gene has authored or co-authored nine books, hundreds of magazine articles and has been involved in multiple outdoor video, audio and TV productions. He has been a keynote speaker for the NRA Great American Hunters Tour and regularly does numerous annual seminars or guest speaker engagements nationwide. Hunting strictly with bows and arrows,

Gene has taken over two dozen species of big game. He has hunted all over America, Canada, Alaska, and has made over a dozen trips to Africa. Other ventures include the Wensel Woodsman, a 3:1 ratio broadhead of Gene's design.

Whitetail deer are the Wensel's specialty. From 1990 thru 1996, Barry and Gene guided almost 200 bowhunters to Pope & Young class whitetail bucks. Their success rate of 96% over seven consecutive seasons was possibly the highest known fair chase, free-ranging trophy whitetail, guided bowhunting results in history.

The Wensel's most recent venture was co-production of two classic hunting DVDs, Primal Dreams and Essential Encounters, winning multiple cinematography awards and rave reviews from outdoor enthusiasts world-wide. Barry and Gene consider these two DVDs among their proudest accomplishments of their outdoor careers. For more information, check out www.brothersofthebow.com



Banquet Activities Schedule

- 9:00 AM - *Vendor Rooms Open*
- 10:00 AM - **Seminar #1- Jason Farr**
"Bowhunting Musk Ox"
- 11:00 AM - **Seminar #2 – Paul Shelton, Biologist, IL DNR**
"Current Topics in Conservation"
- 12:00 PM - **Break for lunch**
- 1:00 PM - **Seminar #3 – Gene Wensel, Guest Speaker**
"Understanding Air Currents"
- 2:30 PM - Membership Meeting
- 4:00PM - Bucket Raffle Drawing
- 6:00PM - *Banquet Doors Open*

For Additional Banquet Information and further details, or if you would like to be a vendor at our banquet please feel free to call or email:

Jerry Gille, jgille5695@yahoo.com (217) 455-3453

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Region 5 Report - Tuck Williams

By now the archery season will be over and I hope all had a successful and safe season. It's time to take down your stands and inspect them for damage or bad chains and straps which should be replaced. Once that's done it's time to think of what you can do you improve and enhance your hunting season next year. One of the best ways is to put in food plots in strategic areas. Depending on what you plant you might want to get started now. You can still spray Roundup to prep an area and kill unwanted grasses and weeds. After a few weeks and before April when we still have freezing and thawing going on I like to seed with clover. I use ladino and purple top varieties and last season just by top seeding I produced a good stand of clover in both the food plots I worked. Clover is relatively inexpensive, three or four pounds will easily do an acre of ground. It helps to prepare the area with granulated limestone since clover likes a less acidic soil and it improves the exchange of trace minerals in the soil. If once your clover is up it helps to mow it a few times during the growing season to keep invasive grass down so they don't crowd out the clover. I also plan on topdressing our stand of clover this year with alfalfa since deer love alfalfa. Most people drill alfalfa but since we lack the equipment I'm going to try the topdressing method. You want to sow the seed when the ground is frozen so the freezing and thawing will open up the surface and allow the seed to penetrate into the soil. If you do



this too early the turkeys and rodents will eat it all so do it when you think you only have a few more weeks of freezing weather. Late season crops like soybeans and turnips should be done after June for a late season food plot. Even if it doesn't draw deer to you while you are hunting a food plot it will help in the basic nutrition of your deer herd and may keep more of them on your property during the season. Good luck and be safe.

Region 4 Report - Gilbert Best

Greetings! Happy New Year from Region 4!

Tree stand safety cannot be talked about enough. My hunting friend fell about 14 feet while getting out of his stand this past Fall. God and luck was on his side that day. Even though he spent the night in a hospital that night for observation, he came out just fine. With my friend's accident it reminds me that all hunters need to be aware of the stand, and take care to do all you can to be safe. Let someone know exactly where you are just in case, and don't forget to take your cell phone with you. Tree stand safety is what we all need to be aware of and be about.

Not much to report on the deer hunting here in Macoupin County. I have seen the deer population diminish here in my area. It is sad. I am still out but on the ground more and more. Using a gillie suit seems to be my choice of camouflage hunting, but has proved to have it's own challenges. It could be the age or the fake knee that keeps me on the ground. I just find that hanging tree stands take too much time, energy, or from the immortal words of B.B. King, "the thrill is gone". I do enjoy being able to move freely in my gillie suit, as well as experiencing nature on the ground.

I am looking forward to the New Year. Don't forget that our banquet has been moved up a whole month to February 6, 2016. Call to make reservations at the motel or just show up for some great information, camaraderie, and a great time. If you are from Region 4 don't forget to look me up so we can plan a new event for the region. I am looking for new ideas and new ways to engage and promote more like-minded bow hunters in our region.

Best hunting to all!

Gilbert



Region 3 Report - Ron Hayford

As I write this report, deer season is winding down. I have seen some deer, but not had the opportunity to draw down on one. They are smarter and better adapted than I am. I accept that fact, but after a while “lady luck” should step in and even the odds. Don’t you think? Maybe there’s still some time left.

Eagle Creek Rendezvous was well attended again this year. We have many who have it on their calendar every year and a few new faces I hope will become regulars at the event. The weather was good again this year. Of those who hunted, many saw deer and some even got shots, but no deer were hauled into camp. However, we did not go hungry. Friday is southwestern stew and cornbread night. Saturday night’s potluck is pulled or sliced pork and potatoes brought in by Bill Ferry of Broken Arrow Archery, who also hosts and caters our summer shoot. We had about 50 friends and family at the potluck, and they all brought delicious desserts and dishes to share. The meal alone is something to look forward to each year. The trees were in full fall color, and the campfire felt good on the cool October nights. Firewood is provided by our gracious park superintendent Richard Glazebrook. He also allows us to set up a lighted practice range with a half dozen Rhinehart targets in the campground. Thank-you Richard for your cooperation.

Speaking of Rhinehart targets our summer shoot host Broken Arrow Archery is also holding a Rhinehart 100 on May 21st and 22nd 2016. This is a big event for our area. A semi load of Rhinehart targets travel around the country setting up 100 target courses in places capable of handling this size of an event. Then in June we will have the summer shoot. It is a fantastic wooded course with Rhinehart targets set at realistic settings. Last year many of us camped at Fox Ridge State Park and all were pleasantly surprised at how nice the campsites were. So mark this event on your calendars as well. The dates are June 4th and 5th 2016,. While filling your calendar, write in the dates of the Eagle Creek Fall Rendezvous on October 13th-16th 2016.



The potluck at the Fall Rendezvous

The banquet is a month earlier this year, so we will be getting together soon after this newsletter comes out. I hope to see everyone there having the usual good time.



A beautiful view on a hike at Fox Ridge State Park.

Treasurer's Report - 12-9-15

	Original Balance		
Legal Fees	\$ 100.00		
		Illinois Secretary of State (Legal Fees)	\$ (10.00)
		Cusack, Gilfillan & O'Day LLC (Annual Report)	\$ (75.00)
			Current Balance \$ 15.00
Insurance	\$ 825.00		
		06.21.13 Regional Excess Underwriters, LLC (Insurance)	\$ (671.00)
		03.01.14 \$50.00 Refund (Overpayment)	\$ 50.00
			Current Balance \$ 204.00
Website	\$ 200.00		
		Michael Wiltse (Web Hosting)	\$ 119.40
		Michael Wiltse (Web Hosting & Domain Renewal)	
			Current Balance \$ 319.40
IFOR	\$ 300.00		
		IFOR (Membership Dues)	\$ (241.50)
			Current Balance \$ 58.50
Compton	\$ 65.00		
		(Membership Dues)	\$ (65.00)
			Current Balance \$ -
Newsletter	\$ 3,300.00		
		Michael Wiltse (Spring 2015 Newsletter)	\$ (547.46)
		Michael Wiltse (Summer 2015 Newsletter)	\$ (569.56)
		Michael Wiltse (Fall 2015 Newsletter)	\$ (689.46)
		Michael Wiltse (Winter 2015 Newsletter)	\$ (698.37)
			Current Balance \$ 795.15
Summer Shoot	\$ 300.00		
			Current Balance \$ 300.00
Advertising	\$ 350.00		
			Current Balance \$ 350.00
Regional Reps	\$ 250.00		
			\$ -
			Current Balance \$ 250.00
Membership Sec.	\$ 300.00		
			Current Balance \$ 300.00
Conservation Comm.	\$ 1,000.00		
		Partners for Parks and Wildlife Annual Membership	\$ (25.00)
		Plaque for IDNR Employee	\$ (17.00)
		CPO Hotel Room	\$ (88.48)
			Current Balance \$ 869.52

Region 2 Report - Dan Forystek

From all the stories I have listened to this fall others in the area seem to have had better luck this season than last season. For myself I will have to rely on memories of past successful seasons, like the Friday the 13th buck back in the 90's that apparently read the script, walking down the trail within spitting distance, stopping and turning his head to smell the deer sent.

The stars did not exactly line up for bow hunting this fall. A word to the wise to aging outdoor enthusiast. Most people at some point in time will require cataract surgery. Persons who spend a lot of time in the sun could develop a growth on the eye called a pterygium (surfer's eye). No big deal until you need cataract surgery. If your doctor does not remove a pterygium first it can ruin the vision in that eye, and you will need corrective surgeries that won't guarantee anything better afterwards.

Sometimes you just can't hunt and you have to face it. Bowhunting is very important to me. It revitalizes me. It puts a person in the woods that is where some of us belong and where we need to be for a while. I have been so blessed in the past having every fall to hunt. I have been spoiled.



On the bright side the unusually warm December has made fishing on the big lake better than I have ever seen with limits of Jumbo Perch and big Lake Trout for the smoker. I still haven't figured out weather I shiver and shake more in the boat or in the tree stand. I like them both.

I hope all of you had a good season.

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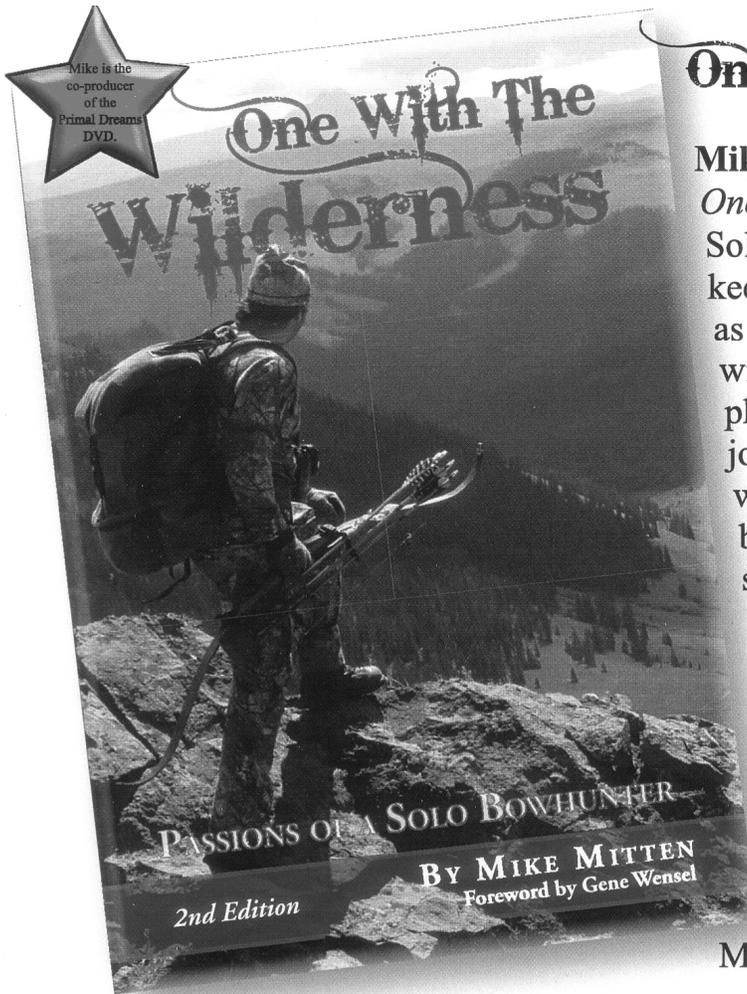


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Bowhunter Naturalist - Bobcat - Jamie Ellis

One of the most secretive and elusive member of Illinois's fauna is the bobcat. And it is a species that has generated some news and heated conversations recently with the passage of legislation to allow hunting for the first time in over 40 years. In this article I briefly describe the bobcat, some of its natural history, and some arguments for and against hunting this distinctive cat.

Bobcats (*Lynx rufus*) are readily recognized as Felidae (cat family)—short muzzle with rounded head; lithe body with muscular limbs; and sharp, curved, retractable claws. They stand about 20-24 inches at the shoulder, are 30-35 inches long, and weigh an average of 22 lbs. The fur on its back and sides is yellowish brown, reddish brown, or gray with black spots. Its under-parts are white with black spots. Small tufts of hair on the tips of the ears make them look pointed, and a “ruff” of long fur with dark streaks extends along the cheekbones that gives their face a full, rounded appearance. And of course the short or “bob” tail (4-7 inches long) that gives this animal its common name. Tracks are round and about two inches long; they show four toes without claw marks and two lobes on the bottom edge of the heel pad. Scat tends to be highly segmented and full of hair. It is sometimes but not always covered with dirt or leaves.

Bobcats occupy a variety of habitats; in the Midwest they thrive in second growth forest with a dense understory in landscapes interspersed with shrub land, fields, and streams. Forest is needed for protective cover and den sites while forest edges and grassland are needed for hunting prey. Bobcats are known to adapt to living near human dwellings, but they generally avoid people.

Felids are the most carnivorous of the carnivores, and bobcats eat mostly mammals including rabbits, voles, and squirrels. They are also known to take mice, groundhogs, chipmunks, muskrats, opossums, shrews, deer, and many other meaty critters. Fawns and sick deer are easy targets, and they are capable of killing adult deer though this is uncommon. Typically they hunt by stalking prey and then quickly dash and pounce. Other times they sit in ambush.

Mating can take place from January to June but usually peaks in February. They can be very vocal during the breeding season, producing eerie yowls and screams. Females usually have one litter each year and only they provide parental care. She makes a nest of dried grass and leaves in the hollow base of a tree, hollow log, brush pile, rock crevice, or cave. After a gestation of 50-70 days, litters of 1 to 4, helpless kittens are born.

Bobcats are active year-round, but they are hard to spot, as they are primarily nocturnal and solitary. They can move a mile or more per night, often traveling wooded stream corridors and forest edges. During the day bobcats rest amid dense shrub cover, in a brush pile, in hollow logs and trees, in groundhog burrows, or on rock ledges, almost never in the same spot two days in a row.

They have little fear from natural predators in Illinois though coyotes and large dogs are capable of killing them. Kittens may be prey for coyotes, foxes, or large owls. Vehicles cause most bobcat mortality in Illinois. They are capable of living up to 15 years in the wild.

Bobcats range over most of the US where there is suitable habitat. They once ranged widely over Illinois, but due to loss of habitat and unregulated hunting and trapping, bobcat numbers dwindled through the late 19th and early 20th century remaining only in far southern Illinois. Bobcat hunting was banned in 1972 and they were listed and protected as a threatened species in Illinois in 1977.

Bobcats responded well to protection from hunting and habitat restoration. During the 1990's, a study conducted by the Cooperative Wildlife Research Laboratory at Southern Illinois University confirmed reports of bobcats in all but three counties. Bobcats were removed from the list of state threatened species in 1999. Statewide, the number of bobcats sighted by archery deer hunters increased more than ten-fold from 1992 to 2012. This trend is supported by intensive studies in the southern third of the state, where the number of bobcats increased from 2,200 in 2000 to 3,200 by 2009. Today, it is estimated that as many as 5,000 bobcats occur in Illinois.

According to a study by Roberts and Crimmins (2010), bobcat populations are stable or increasing in almost every state where they occur; they can be found in 47 of the lower 48. No bobcats found in Delaware. They also estimated the population of bobcats in the US somewhere between 2.4 to 3.6 million individuals. In another article Brown (2015) reported that the top ten states with the highest harvest numbers (2011-12 season) of bobcats are: Kansas (5,918), Missouri (4,199), Nevada (3,992), Oklahoma (3,569), Oregon (3,496), New Mexico (2,635), Georgia (2,454), Kentucky (2,417), Montana (1,974) and West Virginia (1,857).

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A hunting season for bobcats was inevitable in Illinois with the increase in bobcat numbers and the desire of hunters wanting to pursue this animal in our home state. And this being Illinois, it is not without some drama and politics. In 2014, Representative Wayne Rosenthal (now DNR Director Rosenthal) introduced a bill to allow bobcat hunting and trapping. It passed the House in March and Senate in December. With vocal pressure from groups opposing this, Governor Quinn, on almost his last day in office, vetoed the bill in January 2015. A bill was reintroduced early in the 2015 session, and was passed, with just enough votes, in June. Governor Rauner signed the bill into law in July. This laws goes into effect January 1, 2016.

This new law allows for a November through February bobcat season. The IDNR will issue 500 permits and allow a harvest of 300 animals. When they reach this limit, the season will end. The

law also states the permit fee will be \$5 (which I think is too low). Only one permit per person will be allowed. At this time, I'm not sure of other details.

A bobcat season has been condemned by anti-hunting and animal rights groups, particularly the Humane Society. They claim that it's wrong to hunt these shy and elusive creatures; they play an important role in the ecosystem. They say there isn't that many in Illinois. Some supporters of the season claim that bobcats are a menace to other game species (particularly whitetail deer), to livestock, and even to humans. They say there's too many in Illinois.

I think there is some truth and farce on both sides. Is there enough to hunt? Probably, but the IDNR and other biologists will need to closely monitor the numbers. I'm guessing hunters in southern Illinois will have more success than in other parts of the state. Is it wrong to hunt them? If you're against hunting bobcats, you're probably against all hunting. Sure, most hunters and trappers are looking for the challenge of the hunt or a pelt to sell. To hunt them or not would take up another page. I'll save that for another time. I do support allowing bobcat hunting, but I'm not particularly fond of legislators setting hunting seasons, fees, or bag limits. Let's leave that up to IDNR biologists. Do bobcats really hurt the deer or turkey or rabbit population? As a top predator, they do play an important role in the ecosystem. There could be some local effects, but I'm not convinced that lots of bobcats mean less deer. Are they a menace to people and stock? Again, there may be rare, isolated incidents but probably not.

Are you going to apply for a permit?

Citations:

Brown, T. 2015. Best states for bobcat hunting 2015. Petersen's Hunting. <http://www.petersenshunting.com/predators/best-states-bobcat-hunting-2015/#ixzz3viyT66Wb>. Online article accessed 29 December 2015.

Roberts NM, Crimmins SM. 2010. Bobcat population status and management in North America: evidence of large-scale population increase. *Journal of Fish and Wildlife Management* 1(2):169-174.

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UBI New Member Applicant Ballot

Dear Fellow UBI Members:

The following individuals have applied for membership in the UBI and are to be voted in at this time. If you have any information regarding these members that you feel the Board of Directors should be made aware of, please let a member of the Board know. Indicate your vote by writing a "YES" or "NO" next to the applicant's name and send the ballot to the UBI Membership Secretary at the address listed below. A ballot that is blank or not returned will be accepted by the Board as a "YES" vote. If you have a question for the applicant or would like to introduce yourself to the individual, please make an effort to contact them individually. If you need assistance contacting an applicant, please contact the Membership Secretary for their information.

The voting deadline is 30 days after the news letter mailing.

Thank you for your continued attention to our membership.

Tim Nuss
UBI Membership Secretary
500 W. Green Street
Roberts IL 60962

217-395-2411
ubimembershipsec@hotmail.com

NEW MEMBER APPLICANT

<u>Name</u>	<u>City, State</u>
Frank LaCaze	Salem, Illinois
Greg J. Bouras	Alma, Illinois

Visit The New UBI Website at;

<http://www.unitedbowhuntersofillinois.org>

UNITED BOWHUNTERS OF ILLINOIS

The purpose of the United Bowhunters of Illinois is:

- To promote fellowship among people whose primary interest in the field of bowhunting is ethics and sportsmanship:
- To encourage and promote the taking of wild game in a fair, humane and ethical manner while hunting with the bow and arrow.
- To educate and share with others the knowledge, safety skills and experiences gained through bowhunting.
- To promote safety and ethical behavior to the non-hunting public.
- To encourage and support sound bowhunting legislation and oppose legislation that is not consistent with its purpose or that is harmful bowhunting.
- To promote and educate people about the wise use of natural resources, conservation of wildlife and preservation of natural habitat
- To work with the Department of Natural Resources to achieve these purposes.
- To promote the heritage and traditions of bowhunting.

UNITED BOWHUNTERS OF ILLINOIS RULES OF FAIR CHASE

The term "Fair Chase" shall not include the taking of animals under the following conditions:

- Helpless in, or because of, deep snow or helpless on ice.
- While swimming. Helpless in a trap.
- While confined behind fences as on a game farm, etc.
- In defiance of game laws or out of season.
- By "jacklighting" or shining at night.
- From any power vehicle or power boat.
- By the use of any power vehicle for herding or driving any animal, including the use of aircraft for landing alongside of any animal or herd, or to communicate with or direct a hunter on the ground.
- By the use of any tranquilizers or poison.
- By the use of firearms, except when hunting with a firearm during legal firearm seasons.
- By the use of a bow and arrow to which any electronic device is attached.

NAME: _____ PHONE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ COUNTY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____

AGE: _____ NUMBER OF YEARS BOWHUNTING: _____

TYPE OF EQUIPMENT USED: ___ LONGBOW ___ RECURVE ___ SELFBOW ___ SHORTBOW ___ OTHER

ARROW TYPE: ___ ALUMINUM ___ FIBERGLASS ___ CARBON ___ WOOD ___ OTHER BROADHEAD: _____

Have you ever been convicted of a game law violation in any state? ___ Yes ___ No

If yes, please explain on a separate sheet of paper.

If accepted as a member of the U.B.I., I pledge to abide by the U.B.I. "Rules of Fair Chase" at all times. I also pledge the use of a traditional hunting bow* of at least 40 pounds (peak weight) and the use of arrows, including broadheads, of not less than 400 grains, while in the pursuit of large game animals. I also pledge to abide by all game laws of the state or province in which I am hunting and at all times to maintain the highest ethical standard possible while hunting.

SIGNATURE _____ DATE: _____

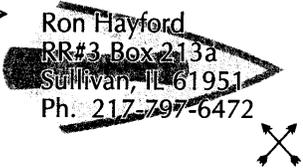
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UBI Crossbow Position Statement

The United Bowhunters of Illinois is adamantly opposed to the inclusion of any weapon that is not hand drawn and hand held in Illinois' archery season. Specifically, we are opposed to the use of the crossbow and the drawlock device, as well as any other weapon that does not require the shooter to draw by hand, hold by hand, and release by hand. Such weapons have the potential to negatively alter the primitive weapon status originally designated for archery seasons in Illinois

We are not opposed to the use of such devices by the truly handicapped, but we do question the legitimacy of some of these cases. Therefore we support all efforts by the IDNR to maintain the integrity in issuing handicap permits so as to minimize abuse in this practice

UBI Archery Season Position Statement

The United Bowhunters of Illinois is opposed to the creation of any new hunting season, or the extension of any existing hunting season which will decrease the length of the archery only season or displace the season into less favorable dates. While the United Bowhunters of Illinois recognizes the rights of hunters who choose to use other weapons in separate hunting seasons, we will oppose all efforts to include such users in Illinois' archery season

UBI Big Game Shooting Enclosure Position Statement

The United Bowhunters of Illinois opposes any big game hunting where the animal is within the confines of game proof enclosures. We oppose this despicable practice on the grounds of fair chase hunting, the threat of disease spreading from captive cervids to our wild deer populations, and the fact that privatizing wildlife is contrary to the North American model of game management. It is our position that the selling of hunts for big game animals that have been raised within an enclosure, or animals that currently are confined within an enclosure should be illegal in Illinois