

HUNTERS HAVEN

2020



North Dakota is a hot spot for hunting of all kinds – duck, geese, pheasant, sharp-tail grouse, moose, whitetail deer – and the list goes on. While out on your hunting trip, stop in and visit these local businesses!

Jackson 'mounts' new endeavor

BY TYSON SMEDSTAD
BHG News Service

Chloe Jackson has just returned from an antelope hunt in Wyoming. Both she and her husband were both able to fill their tags.

Jackson opened her taxidermy business when she moved to Garrison in December after marrying local, Zach Jackson. She lives near Fort Stevenson with her husband and yellow lab, Bakken, and quarter-horse, Marley.

Their honeymoon was a hunting trip in Wyoming. She had gotten a mountain lion tag. After tracking one down, her husband told her to take the shot.

"He knew it was my dream hunt," Chloe said.

Needless to say, she lucked out in moving to Garrison. She couldn't have hand-picked a better location to start a taxidermy studio with miles of hunting land and Lake Sakakawea just down the road.

"I grew up watching my dad. He always did taxidermy for friends and family and I always had an interest in it," Jackson said. "I always skinned out animals that we hunted or trapped. So, I've had bits and pieces throughout my

life, but as a full-time deal, it's only been since I got here in December."

There are different ways to become a taxidermist. You can go to school for it, or learn as you go, watch dvd's, attend seminars and go to day classes.

"There (are) maybe two other women in North Dakota that I've met and talked to that have been at the taxidermy show and seminars. So that's pretty awesome," Jackson said. "But there's definitely more guys."

Jackson does it all: birds, fish and Europeans mounts. Her favorite animals to work on are big game heads.

"But I really like doing fish too," Jackson said. "And being on Sakakawea, we have big fish here."

Garrison local, Sam Hellekson has worked with Chloe on numerous occasions.

"She did a ten pound walleye I caught on Fort Peck this spring, and she is working on my Boone and Crockett Wyoming antelope. She did a fantastic job on my walleye," Hellekson said. "She wanted to know the entire trophy story and educated me on the mounting and display options. She understands that a trophy isn't just about the size of the animal but it's about the



Chloe Jackson received the Best of Category Any Fish and Best Novice Division Entry awards at the North Dakota Taxidermists Association Wildlife Art Show in Bismarck with a perch.



Submitted Jackson's white tail deer mount took second place to her perch at the same competition in February.

memories made in the outdoors with friends and family. She loves the outdoors and animals and has a natural eye for capturing unique characteristics of animals. She is an excellent artist."

Jackson has a steady stream

of business so far this year. She's already finished, or is working on, a shoulder mount of a moose, multiple deer, an antelope, a bear, some Sakakawea salmon, and many fish replicas including walleye, geese and ducks. Not to men-

tion her own mountain lion mount that's in the works.

If you need a mount or a replica you can call or text Jackson at 701-836-1001, check her Facebook page or send her an email at jacksontaxidermystudio@gmail.com.



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Young hunter secures first kill

BY JERICK TAFOYA
BHG News Service

By Jerick Tafoya
"It's awesome. I grew up hunting. So it was really good to see him get into it."

That's what longtime hunter Brad Hetzler said. He was referring to his 10-year-old son Chase Hetzler.

Like most children, that is how Chase got into the hobby of hunting. And this year during Chase's first hunting season, he was able to get his first kill as well. Brad said, "We were sitting on the hillside for probably about an hour. We did have to move one time to get closer to the animal. This is his first year with a license."

Brad added, "This was the first year he was eligible to deer hunt. This was the first year he ever got to carry a gun with him."

Prior to that, Chase would go hunting with his dad. But it wasn't quite the same. It felt different.

"It kind of gets boring at some points when you're just waiting around and you have to be super quiet," Chase said.

This year though, Chase got his chance.

"I was really scared at first. I was just sweating," Chase said.

When asked about being scared of the animal, Chase responded, "Yes actually, I was. I saw her in the bushes. She was looking straight at me."

Brad added, "It was a pretty small doe. After I butchered it, we got about 30 pounds of meat."



Submitted

Ten-year-old Chase Hetzler gets his first kill. This is his first year having a hunting license.

"We weren't really anticipating getting a deer that day. So it kind of happened by luck I guess."

Chase's shot wasn't by luck though. He put in the time to improve his shooting.

"We have a target in our garage. And we also went out on our land and set up a shooting stand," Brad said.

Even after securing his first kill, Chase is eager for next year.

Chase admitted he'd go hunting every day if he could.

Brad said, "You only get one a year. So he's gotta wait until next year."

And although he has to wait several years for the opportunity, there are other animals that Chase wants to hunt.

"I would like to buck hunt. And bird hunting would be kind of fun too," Chase said.



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What to know about your local game and fish violations

BY RALPH MANCINI
BHG News Service

There's more than meets the eye for the inexperienced hunter looking to harvest local wildlife. We were recently given the lowdown on game and fishing violations from a state officer who's been enforcing state regulations since 1979.

Purchasing a license, which can easily be done with a cell phone, is the first step all hunting enthusiasts should follow through on before they begin tracking their prey, according to Turtle Lake-based District Game Warden Tim Larson, who added that recognizing your game is half the battle.

"With ducks and geese, the biggest thing is being able to identify your birds because they are regulated by species and sex," he says. "When you look at one pintail, one redhead or two redheads, you have to be aware of what you're shooting at and what you're keeping."

In trying to figure what can be captured and ultimately kept as it relates to waterfowl, for example, a basic bag of six ducks can contain no more than five mallards and no more than two hen mallards.

Likewise, when one is transporting their small game, they have to be able to show specific features, such as a fully-feathered head or

a fully-feathered wing. In the case of upland birds, such as the fully-feathered rooster, it's redeeming marker would be it's leg that has a distinguishing spur.

When tackling big game, Larson noted that transporting any kind of elk, pronghorn, deer or bighorn sheep requires immediate tagging after they're harvested. Those tags should include the dates of the kill.

"Not tagging your deer, that could be a first offense where you could have your license [removed]," he cautioned, "because hunting is a privilege; it's not a right, and you can lose that privilege."

Larson further mentioned that if his agency can prove that a violator's equipment was used in illegally killing multiple deer or other category of big game, that person can lose their firearm and their hunting privileges. "And there's also a civil penalty that can be invoked," he continued. "It's what you pay for the animals you removed from the wild. There can also be a jail sentence, but that's up to the court."

In one extreme circumstance, the law enforcement agent recalled a poacher in Colorado who illegally shot 18 deer and wound up serving a month in jail as a result.

Trespassing is another forbidden offense, as individuals found

guilty of hunting on posted land without permission can instantly lose their hunting, fishing and trapping privileges for a year. Trespassing infractions, moreover, can reportedly be prorated if they occur a second time over a short period. A third violation, said Larsen, may carry a five-year revocation of one's hunting rights.

Mistakes are often committed by out-of-state visitors who are unaware of shotgun policies that prohibit hunters from loading more than three shot shells when pursuing upland game birds. Both Minnesota and Wisconsin, for instance, lack those requirements.

When the topic turned to fishing, the warden instructed area trawlers to be cognizant of how they transport their catch. In certain enclosed water sites, people are limited to slicing each fish in two filets, which counts as a "whole fish."

While commenting on the 2019 total of infractions in the state (over 2,300), the Kenmare native said that amount is similar to what the North Dakota Game and Fish Department typically deals with.

"I would say that our compliance overall has improved. But I know further out west, you have an influx of people, [where] violation rates go up because they are either not aware of the regulations or they don't care about them."

WILD GAME

VENISON SUMMER SAUSAGE

Ingredients

- 1 premixed package of Leo's summer sausage seasoning
- ¼ C mustard seed
- 1/3 C pepper
- 18 lb venison
- 7 lb pork
- 3 lb mahogany-colored casings

Directions

Mix the cut pieces of venison and pork with spices and let sit in a cooler/refrigerator overnight. Grind the meat mixture two times through a large-screen, then through a medium screen. STUFFING -- Adding small amounts of water will help the mixture go through the stuffer more easily.



SUMMER SAUSAGE WITH PEPPER JACK CHEESE

Ingredients

- 1 premixed package of Leo's summer sausage seasoning.
- ¼ C mustard seed
- 1/3 C pepper
- 18 lb venison
- 7 lb pork
- 2-1/2 lb Pepper Jack cheese (high-temp)
- 3 lb mahogany-colored casings

Directions

Mix the cut pieces of venison and pork with spices and let sit in a cooler/refrigerator overnight. Grind the meat mixture two times through a large-screen, then through a medium screen. STUFFING -- Mix in Pepper Jack cheese just before stuffing. Adding small amounts of water will help the mixture go through the stuffer more easily.



BREAKFAST SAUSAGE PATTIES

Ingredients

- 1 premixed package of Leo's breakfast sausage seasoning
- 12.5 lb venison
- 12.5 lb pork.

Directions

Mix the cut pieces of venison and pork with the seasoning mix and LET SIT OVERNIGHT in a cooler/refrigerator. Grind the meat mixture two times through a large-screen, then through a medium screen. After grinding, package into 1-lb packages. If you want to stay away from salt, do not use curing salt, if you just put into patties. If you plan on stuffing and smoking it, you have to use the curing salt.

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Father & daughter enjoy youth season

BY JARANN JOHNSON
BHG News Service

Mattea Hysjulien is only 12, but she's had her fair share of success during North Dakota's Youth Deer Hunting Season. Mattea has reached her goal every season and improved each time out.

North Dakota's Youth Hunt Season is about 10 days long and runs during the last two weeks of September. Mattea has been with her dad, Brent, each of the past three successful hunts.

Her first hunt was her favorite. Mattea said the first hunt felt like a new adventure even though her shooting wasn't great.

"I think it was just my first year because I didn't know exactly what to expect or where they would go if I shot them," Mattea added. "The first year was pretty hard. I shot at a lot of them, but I kept missing. Then on the last day of my first year, I got it that morning. I was lucky for getting that."

Years 2 and 3 have gone a lot smoother for Mattea. She said she got her Doe with four shots during Year 2 and one shot during Year 3.

"The second year, last year. I think it was the third or second day. I think that one I shot 2 or 3 and missed. But the first year was bad - I shot at it like 12 times. Then it was four," Hysjulien said. "This year, I got it first shot."

Brent has been with Mattea for all three hunts. Mattea said

her father's hints and tips focus on pointing out deer and reminding her to stay quiet.

"He just sits there and says 'O there's one.' Then he'll say 'Be quiet or else you are going to scare them away.' So then I have to be quiet," Mattea said.

Brent said his focus for the youth hunt is finding a place where Mattea doesn't have to rush and can make a good shot.

"With a youth hunt when they are that young, it is nice to be set up on a spot where you know the deer will come. Because it's easier for the dad, easier for the kid to make a good shot. I think it's not rushed when you are sitting there waiting for them to come," Brent said.

"It's kind of like bow-hunting to a degree. We have a gun that can reach further, but it just makes it easier."

Mattea enjoyed the challenge of the first year. She enjoyed having to work a little bit to find the deer she wanted.

"The first year, it took longer. It was more fun because you got to go out more than you would normally. This year was boom, done," Mattea said.

"The first year was like; boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom - OH, it's done now."

Brent said he took Mattea right to the spots he liked during Year 2 and Year 3. But might try to find new places to take Mattea in the future.

"The second and third years we went to a spot we knew had some deer. I think that's probably the difference. The adven-

ture of the first time out," Brent said. "Next year, or in future events we might have to do more adventure or different spots. But it sounds like she doesn't mind that part."

Brent has enjoyed finding another hobby he can grow and share with his daughter. He credits his wife, Lindsey, with being supportive of the Hysjulien girls learning to hunt.

"Our girls' mom, Lindsey, hunted. So me as a father, I realized she went hunting with her dad. It's part of their family tradition. So, it was really easy when mom was behind her daughters hunting," Brent said.

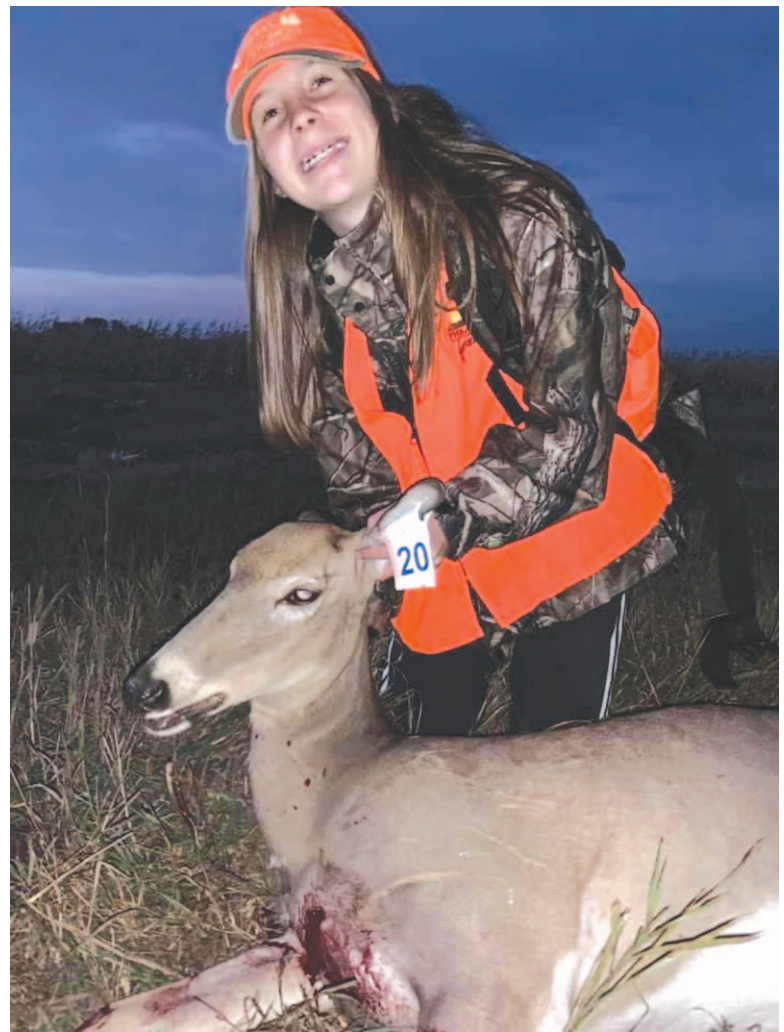
Overall, Brent said his favorite hunting memory with his daughter came during Year 2. Brent said Mattea missed the deer during the first night but hunted in the morning and hit the deer at the next spot they chose.

"When she shot the deer the second year, we were both happy. You could see it on her face, how excited she was when she hit that deer from that distance. She hit it perfect," Brent said.

Mattea and Brent have hunted together for three years during the Youth Hunt Season. They both enjoy it.

Brent thinks hunters shouldn't be scared of introducing hunting to their children.

"My opinion is don't be shy or scared of it. I think every father or hunter has a different confidence level. I think getting your daughter or kids out to shoot safely is kind of a big learning



Mattea Hysjulien, a 12-year-old, has had three successful Youth Hunts consecutively. Hysjulien's father, Brent, has been with her for every youth hunt.

curve. But as you can see three years in you can see she is more confident and excited to do it," Brent said.

Mattea's confidence has grown since she first started hunting and her advice to other young hunters is simple.

"Don't be scared of shooting

it. I think some people think it's bad to shoot a deer. They might be scared to shoot it or feel bad," Mattea said.

Mattea and Brent are a father-daughter hunting duo, and they'll for sure be out there next year, trying to keep their youth hunting streak alive.



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Hunting life benefits in the Prairie Pothole Region

BY ALLAN TINKER
BHG News Service

Friends Andy Prince and Kerry Helm introduced the only hunter of birds in the Martwick family, Jeff to hunting. He was 15 years old. Prince had relatives south of Pickardville who would let them hunt there and they would also go east and west along the McClusky Canal for birds.

North of McClusky, Melvin and Melva Schindler were "real good" about letting him hunt ducks there. "I would give them some ducks when I was done. I cleaned my own harvest but in my early years, Grandmothers Martwick and Pahl would help clean or take the excess birds. My family and I don't eat much wild fowl but they liked it.

"There weren't many geese back then. The flyway was wider, along the river then, but Turtle Lake was good hunting for migra-

tory and there were lots of 'local' ducks there. Now we have out of state hunters in the McClusky and Sheridan County area as the geese have moved in with the flyway changes. There are many more ducks and geese now."

Martwick used a 12 gauge side-by-side (double barrel) with a 2 s -inch shell he bought from Steve Neff. "I used it so much I wore the bluing off in spots. It was a Universal shotgun, made in Spain, and I hunted sharp-tail grouse and Hungarian partridge, my favorite birds to hunt. There were a few pheasant back then (1970's) but many came into the area later. They are runners and you need a dog when you hunt pheasant. The other birds just drop when they are hit, but pheasant will run as far as they can," said Martwick.

"I hunted with Rod Davis who had a dog that was good for hunting, but he never worked well

for me. Later on, I had a German Shorthair hunting dog named Nikki Von Sheridan (she was registered). She would run out 25 feet to the side and then run back and forth across to the same distance on the other side as we walked. She was one smart dog."

In the 1980s, Martwick hunted deer with his dad, when walking got harder for his dad, they quit in about 2012-2013. For hunting deer, he used a Weatherby Van Guard chambered in a Winchester 270.

"I never had a head mounted as I thought for that much money I could instead by another firearm. In about 1995, he started bird hunting with Doug Kurle."

They would start by Lincoln Valley and the McClusky Canal in that area and work south to McClusky, hunting in land owned by a relative. He added that Kurle needed a place to work on guns in the winter, so had

Kurle made a small wood "man cave" near his sister's place and worked on his hunting gear and firearms in cold weather.

Another great teacher of many things about hunting and firearms was the late Tom Turnbull. Turnbull introduced him to Joe Barland, who became his hunting buddy, as well as the "responsible party" for paperwork and background checks at Martwick's retirement firearms and supply shop in McClusky.

Martwick said that he and Barland go to about 10 gun shows a year (this year an exception due to COVID) and they sell firearms at four.

Deer licenses are good for certain areas, determined by request, if you are lucky, and whatever is left, if you aren't, said Martwick. He usually hunts



Lifelong hunter and gun collector Jeff Martwick lives in the central portion of the Prairie Pothole Region.

PRAIRIE POTHOLE
continued on pg 12

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Luke Johnson and dog Trigger of Falkirk.

Submitted



McCall Chase (8) and Ellie Gehring show off an afternoons worth of birds.

Submitted



Daphne Lauer's, 13, second year youth deer hunting. Got her deer at 7:40 am on her first day out and had to track it down for a couple hours, but found it. Daphne is from McClusky.

Submitted



Don Winter, BHG News Service



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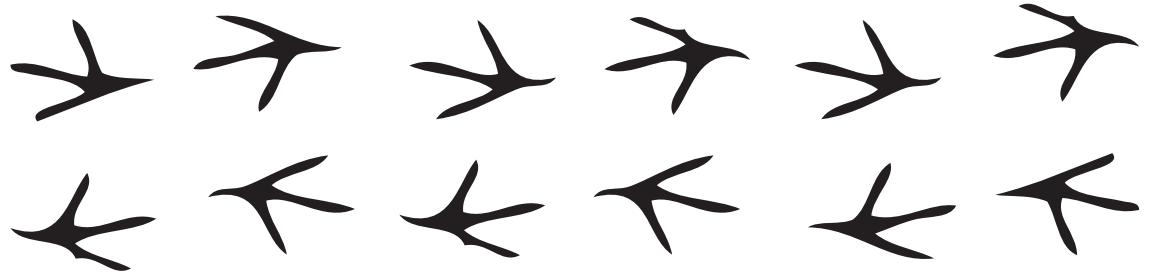
- 1 premixed package of Leo's country sausage seasoning
- 12.5 lb venison
- 12.5 lbs pork
- Regular pig casings

Directions

Mix the cut pieces of venison and pork with the seasoning mix and LET SIT OVERNIGHT in a cooler/refrigerator. Grind the meat mixture two times through a large-screen, then through a medium screen. STUFFING -- Adding small amounts of water will help the mixture go through the stuffer more easily. Slowly fill the pig casings with the meat mixture to desired size.

Extra Pepper Tweak -- If you like a little more ZING to your venison sausage, add 1/3 C black pepper with the seasoning.

Jalapeno cheese Tweak -- If you like even more ZING, add 1 C fine ground jalapeno slices to the spice mixture; cool overnight. Before stuffing add 2-1/2 C Pepper Jack cheese (high-temp). NOTE -- DO NOT GRIND THE CHEESE -- just add it before stuffing.



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Prairie grouse passion:

A first hunt on the North Dakota plains

BY DANIEL ARENS
BHG News Service

Sometimes, people can take for granted what they have in their own backyards. But an outside perspective helps show how much the North Dakota prairie really has to offer.

Nick Arens has spent his entire life in Minnesota. Currently living in Taylors Falls, along the Wisconsin border, Arens knows all the ins and outs of bird hunting in the woods and marshes of that state.

But the open grassland of North Dakota is something new.

For clarity's sake, it should be noted that Nick Arens is the cousin of this article's author. A passionate hunter in his home state, this was his first hunt and even his first visit to North Dakota.

"I came out to visit Dan," Arens said. "And then it evolved into, 'Wait, I can go hunting out there too.'"

Above all, Arens wanted to come out to North Dakota in order to hunt sharp-tailed grouse. While he had seen them occasionally in Minnesota, watching their "spring dance," he had never successfully hunted one before.

"My obsession with prairie grouse is what brought me to that corner of the state," he said.

From Sept. 17-19, Arens made the seven-and-a-half hour trek west to Hazen, staying at the Roughrider Motel there and using that as a base from which to explore the prairies of Mercer and McLean counties.

"I got my North Dakota out-of-state license, that's all it really took," he said. He brought a Savage/Stevens Model 311 16-gauge shotgun for the hunt, as well as his faithful German Shorthair Chief.

Arens spent the time before the trip studying up on the area, and the behavior of the grouse there.

"Kinda just learning the behavior of sharp-tail in short grass rather than brush land," he said. "The behavior's completely different out in your area."

Arens' hunts took him from

west of New Salem off the interstate, north of Beulah, north of the Crossroads and out into McLean County in the Mercer and Turtle Lake area. Wherever he went, he found awe at being in the beautiful and unique landscape of the true Upper Plains.

"It's just the experience is overwhelming," he said. "The sheer grandeur of it all. The distances you can go without reaching a property marker."

In total, Arens got six sharp-tailed grouse and one Hungarian partridge during his hunt. He also had a cookout Sept. 18 with one of the sharp-tails, saying that brought the trip full-circle.

"We thought it was really good and contrary to what most people say," he said. "It's not known as good table fare."

Arens also noted the differences in the grass species and the terrain he walked, with Minnesota hunts usually involving grass up to his shoulder.

"It was tiring, hot and dry," he said. "And I found that very beautiful, with all different species of grass." In particular, the buffaloberry intrigued him, growing not only in the fields but near the shores of Antelope Creek in Hazen.

The chief highlight of his hunting, however, came from the performance of the 2-year-old, Chief.

"Watching the dog go back and forth, the excitement of him getting on point," Arens said. "The excitement of the flush, the retrieve. The laughter of the sharp-tails when they came up."

Unfortunately, Chief's first trip to North Dakota ended on a bad note: a first encounter with a porcupine, resulting in an emergency visit to a vet in Bismarck.

"That was definitely a part of the trip, even though it sucked," Arens said. "Chief pointed on a big clump of buffaloberry. I foolishly assumed it was a bird. As the porcupine ran away, he went after it and got a face full of quills."

Thankfully, the Bismarck trip

Dance of the sharp-tails

Like many species of birds, the sharp-tailed grouse engages a courtship ritual during the spring breeding system. For the grouse, a special "dance" makes up this ritual, providing a memorable experience for hunters and bird enthusiasts like Nick Arens.

"With tails erect, wings spread and air sacs on their necks inflated, the slowly twisting and turning grouse beat a courtship rhythm on the cold bare hilltops like nothing else in nature," according to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

FWS says the males perform this dance on top of grassy hilltops, called "leks." The males have their own individual territories in which to perform their dances to attract females, while any breach of another male's territory might result in a fight.

The dance can occur for a period of days or even weeks, with females arriving shortly after the dancing begins. Following the courtship resulting from the dance, nesting begins.



Daniel Arens: Nick Arens takes aim while hunting sharp-tail grouse east of Hazen. It was Arens' first time hunting in North Dakota; he is a resident of Minnesota.

was successful, and Chief is on the mend.

Arens learned other tricks of the NoDak hunt beside wariness when it comes to clumps of brush cover. One was realizing that some of the rugged, rural roads aren't actually through roads, but prove to be little more than trails. Using a family van as an off-road vehicle isn't necessarily the easiest option to access some of the tougher areas of the region.

"The three biggest lessons I learned out here are never trust a buffaloberry patch, always trust a dog's nose and not every road is for driving in North Dakota," he said.

Arens said he was grateful for the hospitality shown to him and Chief in Hazen and North Dakota, adding he plans on returning and continuing the sharp-tail hunt in the future.

"Yes, definitely planning to come out again," he said. "I think

next time I'll stay closer to Hazen. You don't need to drive far to find birds."

He encouraged residents of the Mercer and McLean area not to take their land in the prairie for granted, and to recognize the valuable species we have right here in the sharp-tailed grouse.

"I think what I want to communicate to everyone is for those not familiar with the prairie grouse, I think it's an animal really worth learning about," Arens said. "Try

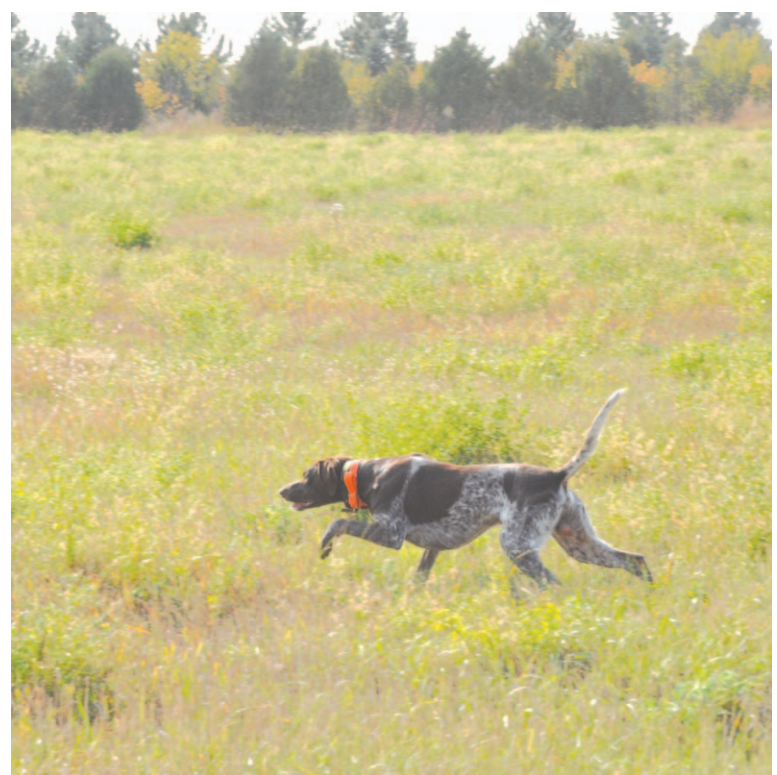
to get out in spring and watch the spring dancing. That's really what sparked the obsession for me."

Arens said if you have a reliable shotgun and walking shoes, you can experience this exciting opportunity for yourself, especially if your hunt also includes a dependable hunting dog like Chief.

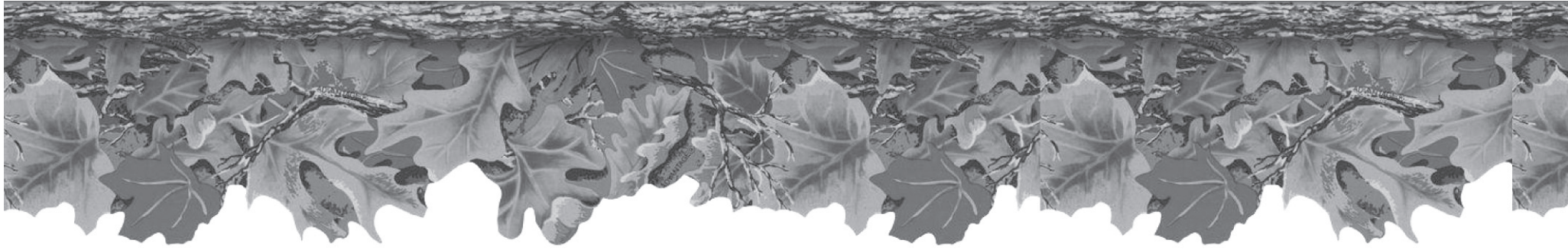
"The grouse really is a staple of the American prairie," he said. "Hazen, North Dakota: you guys are blessed with a pretty awesome resource."



The hunting trip was successful, with Nick Arens bagging six sharp-tailed grouse and one Hungarian partridge. One of the grouse is pictured here.



Chief, Nick Arens' faithful hunting companion, uses his trusty nose to search out grouse.



Audubon refuge welcomes hunters

BY SUZANNE WERRE,
BHG News Service

There are avid hunters who have grown up and lived just a few miles away from the Audubon National Wildlife Refuge that have never hunted there.

They probably have their own reasons, but the refuge, located just north of Coleharbor along US Highway 83, is a hunter's haven for those looking to bag a trophy deer or bring home their limit of pheasant, grouse or partridge.

The refuge is open to archery, rifle and muzzleloader deer hunting, and when deer hunting season is over, the refuge is open

to late-season upland birds – including the elusive Ring-necked pheasant.

While the numbers of pheasants at the refuge aren't up to what they were in the early 2000s, says Kathy Baer, Refuge Manager. Just don't expect one to walk right up in front of you.

"If a guy is willing to walk – I don't know if he'll fill his limit – but he'll see some birds. If you're willing to put in the work, you're going to get some shots off. It's not going to be just a short walk from the parking lot – but that's why it's called hunting and not killing."

The numbers of pheasants are starting to rebound after couple of particularly hard winters in 2009 and 2010, noted Baer, and she's hoping the number of pheasant hunters starts rebounding as well.

"The biggest (change) is the number of pheasant hunters we see on that opening day," Baer

said. "That opening day used to be really crazy. It's taking a little while to build back up."

For hunters who are used to hunting in friends' fields or along country roads, pheasant hunting on the refuge will be a little different, said Baer.

"There's just a lot more natural habitat," said Baer. "There's going to be a lot more water and grass to walk through."

Hunting is one of the few things that coronavirus has not really touched. Hunting lends itself to social distancing, and the staff at the refuge just ask that hunters adhere to social distancing protocol.

There are a few other things they request when hunting at the Audubon Wildlife Refuge, said Baer.

"If a guy is willing to walk – I don't know if he'll fill his limit – but he'll see some birds."

- Audubon National Wildlife Refuge Manager Kathy Baer

One – park in the parking lot. Hunting is

not allowed from the tour trail. Two – lead shot is not allowed on the refuge for upland game. Three – While not required, the refuge staff appreciates it if the shotgun shell hulls are picked up and not left to litter the refuge.

Hunting dogs are allowed on the refuge.

Baer said it's fine if hunters dress their pheasant (or deer) while on the refuge, leaving the remains of the carcass for the foragers on the property.

"Just leave it there – the coyotes will get it," she said.

The visitor's center at the refuge is not open now, noted Baer, but there's no checking-in required to go hunting on the refuge anyway. Hunters may just park



Don Winter, BHG News Service

their rigs in the parking lot and walk in.

For anyone accompanying hunters who are going along just "because" or to see what it's like, the refuge is beautiful, natural masterpiece.

"It's a big place. There's lots of room, and it's just nice being with nature," said Baer.

Anyone out on the refuge during any hunting season is encouraged to wear bright colors, she added – even if they're just out for a hike – hunters need to be able to see any other people who are out there.

A recently-finished 15-mile hiking trail will allow the nonhunters to wind their way through the

refuge's grasslands on a newly groomed and marked path.

Hunters (or hikers) looking for more information on the Lake Audubon Wildlife Refuge at Audubon National Wildlife Refuge 3275 11th St. NW Coleharbor, ND 58531 701 / 442 5474 701 / 442 5546 fax audubon@fws.gov http://www.fws.gov/audubon

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Youth seasons provide launchpad for mentoring

BY NICK SIMONSON
Dakota Edge Outdoors

As the leaves turn their yellow, gold, red and brown, another change in color signals the shift toward fall. In the morning, along any given gravel road, should the conditions be just right and a recently-harvested field be available in pheasant country, it's easy to see the transition in the bird population as the newest crop of roosters begins to ditch the buff hues shared with their young-of-the-year sisters, and instead don the bronzes, golds, reds and maroons of adulthood. It is a sign, much like the quickly departing leaves on the trees, that autumn has arrived and pheasant season is just around the corner.

For many new hunters, the pheasant season and particularly the youth pheasant weekend of Oct. 3 and 4 in North Dakota and youth pheasant week from Sept. 26 to Oct. 4 in South Dakota, provides a chance for them to don a new color as well and join our orange-clad culture. Helping novices make the transition from their spring or summer hunters education courses to those exciting moments behind a field dog in pursuit of roosters in the coming weeks is perhaps the best spent time in the outdoors for an experienced hunter passing on the tradition. What follows are tips to make the most of it and set new hunters on the path to a life-long pursuit.

Focus on Safety

In a controlled environment, say at the patterning board or behind a trap thrower, safety rules are generally easy to recall and enforce. Add in the elements of a chilly morning, a stiff breeze, a running dog or one in an adrenaline-inducing point, and things can become overwhelming for new hunters. Be certain to remind them that not taking a shot is okay. Whether they know it isn't safe when a bird doesn't get up high enough, they just couldn't click their safety over in time, or perhaps just didn't feel right about the shot for another reason, letting new hunters know that the shot is theirs to take – or not – is key in taking the pressure off of each outing.

Additionally, share the idea that not only is blaze orange a perennial fashion color this time of year, it serves a purpose as well. Stress that more of the safety color is better, and be certain to model that behavior by wearing your vest and hat, and share one or two of the dozens you likely have accumulated over the years to help reinforce the idea that visibility equals safety.

Prepare for the Shot

Before the hunt, explain to a new shooter how your dog will work the field. Is it a flusher, a pointer, maybe a little bit of both, depending on the birds? Talk about cues from the way the dog moves when it is on scent to the time it goes on point or puts a

bird in the air. Before entering the field, explain that "ground pounding" roosters is a big no-no, and letting them get airborne with blue sky behind them is the best possible scenario. Address the commands that are common when in pursuit of pheasants – from "whoa" to "go" – so that everyone is aware as to what is going on.

From those cues, be they from a circling flushing dog to a hard-holding pointer, new hunters will learn what to expect leading up to the shot. When the moment comes, help make the call of rooster or hen, and let a

first timer take his or her shot at the bird in flight as they identify it, mount their shotgun and squeeze the trigger. Especially in the early youth season, these moments are the ones that help cement new hunters and future conservationists into the sporting fold.

Just the Start

These days in the early season are only the beginning, not just for the three months of hunting ahead, but for a lifetime. A mentorship doesn't end with just a day in the field but continues throughout the fall and for years to come, particularly

until a young hunter is capable of heading out to the field alone. With each day as the season progresses, remember how birds adjust to pressure and the elements and share those tips and suggestions and the lessons learned along the way. As birds become brightly colored and winter sets in, it's likely that a young hunter will be gaining the experience necessary to predict and adjust to these changes. With a little help and a focus on safety, how things work in the field and what's to come throughout the season, that process will seem to happen as quickly as a bird takes to the wing.

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PRAIRIE POTHOLE
continued from pg 6

for deer in 2KY, an area north of Highway 200. One year he drew the Flasher area for hunting.

About every three years, he applies for an out of state license, usually for antelope. He was drawn and received permits for Utah and Idaho and for North Dakota Lifetime tags that he was lucky to get in 2012. This is a once in a lifetime privilege. That was the year before his heart attack, which slowed him down a bit.

But, four months after he had finished recuperating in 2013, he was in Montana again, after antelope. "The walking is good for me," he said. "My hunting friends were surprised to see me out."

In 2019, his out of state hunting took him to Edgemont, South Dakota, where the owner said she had something for him and his hunting friends. They followed her back into a room where five or six little kittens came running. Luckily, what she had for them was a calendar and pen. Another reward on a hunting trip was at a steakhouse in Gillette, Wyoming, where, in the center of the room, was a case that held a million dollars' worth of wine. He noted it was a great sight. "We eat good when we go out of state," Martwick added.

Last year, six buddies went hunting antelope in Wyoming. He and his partner got there on Tuesday, shot their prey on Wednesday, and headed back home on Thursday. The others wanted to hunt more and stayed the whole week.

In 1978, Martwick read his first hunting magazine and during his 14 years of owning a restaurant and bar and working the bar by himself, he took the magazines

with him for slow times.

After this time, he gained a huge amount of information and could tell people what the make, model, caliber and retail price was on guns on television, literally hundreds of guns. He saved the magazines, 500 or so of them, and still uses them to look up things.

Way back, before he started working, he studied a year of architecture at Grand Forks and a year of zoology in Fargo. One of his first jobs in summer was for ND Game and Fish.

In 1990, his gun purchases went to collecting guns and not for new hunting guns. When he married Rhonda, they started making retirement plans for a gun shop in the summer, with all the other things needed for hunting. When he is finally retired, they will close the shop in January, and travel until the weather and business are back and then come home.

Soon, he will learn to shoot a deer with a muzzle-loader, Barland will teach him. He can hunt all over the state of North Dakota with the permit he won in the drawing but must only shoot antlered (male) whitetail deer. The season for muzzle-loaders follows the regular deer-hunting season, around Thanksgiving.

Jeff's life is a collection of learning along the way, from people he met or knew, about birds, dogs, and firearms; something to talk about with any visiting hunter he meets and valuable for him in business.

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