



The Jayhawker

By Jim Merriott

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Forget trout; try for whitefish

By JIM MERRIOTT

When you bite into a fishstick, you are probably eating whitefish.

The ocean dweller is a cousin to the freshwater whitefish, which is caught in the Rocky Mountains and Canada.

Fishing on the Roaring Fork River, just north of Aspen, has proven to be worth every minute of the drive from Denver at certain times of the year.

The Fork, as most flyfishers call it, is known for its green drake hatch and sizable rainbows, when the flow is running around 950 cubic feet per second.

Fish north of Carbondale to the Colorado River.

Most bridges allow access to open waters, but make sure you are not fishing private property. In Colorado the water is public, but not the land underneath it, so ask permission to fish on private land.

Whitefish, which populate the river, have the same tendencies as rainbows. Whitefish have a small, soft mouth and feed off the same nymphs as the rainbows.

Anglers who are not familiar with whitefish think of them as a trash fish and toss them aside, feeling they compete for the same habitat.

However, in these catch-and-release waters it only makes sense to keep the whitefish and learn how to clean and cook them, although some people think they are too oily.

The secret to catching whitefish is drifting small nymphs on the bottom using No. 12 to No. 20 breadcrust, ribbed hare's ear, and golden stone flies.

To remove the oily taste, clean them immediately after the catch. On bigger fish remove the red lateral

line which runs the length of the fish. This way, the oil does not have time to secrete into the system.

Save the liver and use the oil there to scent leader line for rainbow fishing.

This little trick also helps the dry flies stay afloat when the hatch occurs during the warm-up.

When you are dry fly fishing, I would recommend green drake patterns, PMDs and caddis; No. 12-14 para drakes, extended body drakes, and drake cripples. It also is a good idea to try extended body PMDs on 16, para PMDs on 16 and PMD nymph patterns like the poxy back PMD.

If you've never treated yourself to a good drift trip, think about getting hooked up with a guide in the area. You can be sure it will be money well spent.

Here is a recipe, with an acid basting mixture, that will remove the oily taste from your whitefish:

ZESTY GRILLED WHITEFISH FILLETS

2 pounds of fresh whitefish fillets (Frozen whitefish do not taste as good.)

1/4 cup French dressing

1 teaspoon lemon juice

1 tablespoon grated onion

2 teaspoons salt

Dash of pepper

Combine ingredients. Baste fish with sauce.

Place in well-greased hinged wire grill, so you can flip the fillets over.

Cook about 4 inches above moderately hot coals for no longer than 8 minutes. Continue basting with sauce.

Turn and cook 7 to 8 minutes longer or until fish flakes when tested with a fork.

There's still time to cook up pheasant

By JIM MERRIOTT

Heading into the final month of pheasant season, the Jayhawker has dipped into Mom's old recipe book again to come up with another recipe that will please your palate.

PHEASANT FILLETS and PHEASANT & NOODLES

Make sure your pheasant is a young one by checking for small spurs. Older pheasants tend to get tough.

Soak your bird in baking soda for

30 minutes to help remove shot.

Slice the pheasant breast into three pieces and salt. Dip into buttermilk, then dip into flour. Fry in oil at 375 degrees until medium brown. Serve.

Slow boil the rest of the bird in salt water until fork tender — about an hour. Pick the meat off the bone, then put noodles or dumplings in pheasant broth along with the saved meat.

Simmer for 30 minutes, garnish and serve.

...or try some quail

Even though I grew up in the inner city of Kansas City, I had a few outdoor advantages.

My father, Jim Sr., was a good friend of Harold Ensley, Kansas City, and the midwest's "Sportsman Friend," a professional outdoorsman who had a weekly television program on Channel 5. Both enjoyed the outdoors and Ensley made an everlasting impression on my life.

This is one of his favorite quail recipes. I call it "Quail a la Ensley."

QUAIL

Cut off the legs at the joint of sev-

eral quail. Cut breast in half lengthwise.

Salt lightly, dip in buttermilk, then dip in flour.

Fry in lard in electric skillet at 375 degrees until medium brown.

Serve with wild rice stuffing.

WILD RICE STUFFING

1 cup wild rice

3 cups water

1 tablespoon salt

Heat to simmer for 45 minutes.

Add:

1 can of mushrooms

3 tablespoons of butter

3 tablespoons of crushed pecans

State extends season on antlerless whitetails

For whitetail deer hunters who did not fill their game tags during the regular season, the Kansas Department of Wildlife has extended the whitetail antlerless season through Sunday.

Unified permits are only valid in the unit or units listed on the permit

or game tag.

During the extension Units 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 17 and 18 are closed.

For more information go to the department's web site at www.kdwp.state.ks.us.

Licenses may be purchased over the counter or on-line.

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SHOWING OFF TROPHY FISH, Norm Wendelin with a walleye (above) and Dan Nedland with a lake trout (below) enjoyed their fishing trip to Manitoba in Canada last fall.

Fishermen bring home trophies

By JIM MERRIOTT

Each September for the past 16 years, Norm Wendelin has made the 1,250-mile drive to Cranberry Portage, Manitoba, on the Grassy River to fish for trophy walleye, northern pike and lake trout.

His fishing buddies, John Mickey, Atwood, and Mike Hayden, Lawrence, have gone along. This year, they were joined by first-timer Dan Nedland, Oberlin. (Mr. Hayden, a former Kansas governor, is secretary of the state Department of Wildlife and Parks.)

"The first year we went to Canada, we traveled in a converted black hearse," Wendelin said. "We didn't get very far before the fuel pump failed. We must have been a sight, as the hearse was pulling our fishing boat."

"Over the years, we have run into many different situations that make the trip memorable. One year, one of us was driving and hit a skunk. The vehicle we were driving smelled of skunk scent the whole trip up; it was terrible.

"Another year, we took an older recreational motor home. We were driving late at night somewhere in North Dakota when all the lights

went out. It was pitch black out on this dissolute highway. It was a scary incident.

"Another time, we lost the rear axle out of one of our fishing-boat trailers. Luckily, a friendly gas station owner allowed us to weld the suspension so we could move on. Even though we have had some setbacks, it has been worth it on every trip."

Wendelin's crew captured six master angler awards, from the province of Manitoba, last season.

To receive the award, a fisherman must catch lake trout longer than 35 inches, walleye 28 inches or longer or northern pike 40 inches or longer.

"Over the years, we have learned to master our techniques," said Wendelin. "We keep it simple. We use ultra-light rods and reels with magna thin 8-10 pound line, using a variety of different lures."

"During this time, we have perfected ways even the local Canucks haven't learned. It's kind of funny; we fish the same spots the locals fish and outcatch them on their home waters. All they do is scratch their heads, wondering what they are doing wrong."



Sprint series holds first banquet in Oberlin

The United Rebel Sprint Series celebrated its inaugural Season Awards Banquet on Dec. 16 at the American Legion in Oberlin.

The Rookie of the Year award went to Smokey Fairbank, Ransom.

The Official Tech Man of the

Year was awarded to Bob Ream, Oberlin, and the Hard Core Full-Bore Award went to Larry Radcliffe, Hill City.

The season Champion was awarded to Jon Johnson, Utica.

Brenda Ploussard, Oberlin, was

awarded the Real Brains of the Series Plaque.

Ploussard was voted the person responsible for the behind-the-scenes work.

The series has made some rule changes for the upcoming season. Rule changes can be seen on the web site at www.unitedrebelsprintseries.com or call Rick Salem at 475-7010.

Weather plays havoc with high school sports

Tuesday's scheduled high school basketball games in Norton and a wrestling meet at Oberlin were canceled due to weather. Both will probably be rescheduled.

Friday night, the basketball teams will play host to the Rawlins County Buffaloes starting with the girls'

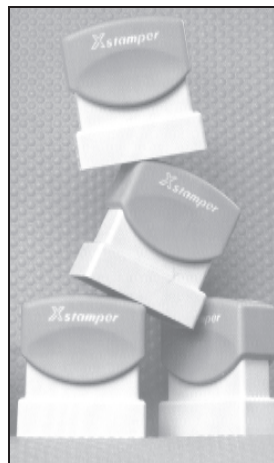
game at 6:30 p.m.

The wrestlers will be on the road to face the Buffaloes in Atwood starting at 6:30 p.m.

Saturday, the junior varsity wrestlers will head to Benkelman, Neb., for the Dundy County junior varsity tournament starting at 10 a.m.

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