



Yahara Fishing Club December 2024 Newsletter

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Ice Fishing in Wisconsin Info and YFC Winter Memories

Editor's Note: Last month our originally scheduled speaker unfortunately had to cancel, but he arranged for a substitute speaker, Ray McBride, who did a great job of talking about his approaches to ice fishing and taking questions. Ray is on the pro staff of FINS Braids and C&N Custom Baits, among other distinctions. However, the impromptu nature of the presentation made it a challenge for our resident scribe, Stan Nichols, to produce his typical summary for the newsletter. So instead, we've assembled some helpful links to ice fishing tips and instruction assembled by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, as well as an interesting ice fishing assessment from the 1959 Yahara Fishing Club Yearbook (who knew?). We hope these articles will get you suitably fired up for the hard water season! Thanks to Tom Raschke for digging up this timely and relevant substitute content. And if you have more questions for Ray, he is easily found on Facebook.

FLAG UP! ICE FISHING IN WISCONSIN

Article and photo from the Wisconsin DNR website:
<https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Fishing/icefishing>

When the snow flies and the wind howls, we know where to find Wisconsin anglers - on the ice! Have a fun and safe season.



ICE FISHING TIPS FROM SEASONED VETERANS

Fisheries biologists Kurt Welke, Skip Sommerfeldt and Terry Margenau give helpful tips on fishing for panfish, walleye and northern pike:

- [Fishing for bluegill and panfish through the ice \[PDF\]](#)

- [Fishing walleye through the ice \[PDF\]](#)
- [Fishing northern pike through the ice \[PDF\]](#)

STAYING SAFE

The DNR does not monitor ice conditions or the thickness of the ice so be sure to check ice conditions before heading out.

MAKE IT A GREAT ICE FISHING SEASON BY:

LEARNING THE TECHNIQUES

A little education can make your ice fishing more successful and a lot more enjoyable. [Try these techniques](#) to put more fish in your bucket!

TAKING A KID ICE FISHING

Skip Sommerfeldt, DNR fish biologist, avid ice angler, and father of three girls shares [tips for ice fishing fun with the whole family.](#)

Another Successful Holiday in Lights Set-Up to Benefit the Yahara Fishing Club



Club members volunteered on the morning of Nov. 6 to help set up the Holiday in Lights display at Olin Park. This event generated \$1,500 for the Yahara Fishing Club. Thanks as always to Gerald King for arranging this fundraiser. Likewise, special thanks to Jim Krause and Kim Galloway (not pictured), who took charge of organizing club member efforts that morning.

DECEMBER MEETING MEANS HOLIDAY POTLUCK!

The whole family is invited. Bring a dish to share. We'll start at 6 p.m. on Dec. 11 to eat, enjoy each other's company, and take care of some club business. The potluck will be in our usual spot, the Arena Room of Bowl-A-Vard Lanes (2121 E. Springs Drive, Madison).

Notes from the President on page 4

Winter club outing opportunities on page 4

Winter 1958-1959 -- Lake Mendota

Hydrobiology Laboratory Staff

Maybe you've noticed some changes on Lake Mendota this winter season of 1958-1959. Think now its been the coldest winter in many a moon, some 39 years to be exact, resulting in over 22 inches of ice and countless testimonials of fishermen as to the real extent of the weather on hands, face, feet and so forth. The snow cover on the ice has been deeper this year than any since 1951, often making walking difficult. Maybe you've noticed when you chop a fishing hole the water rises above the level of the ice. This is because the weight of the snow is forcing the "floating" ice down deeper into the water.

This year's creel census shows that the perch fishing on Lake Mendota has been good—not only good, but very good! How about the status of the population? Just how "healthy" is it? How have four years of liberalized regulations affected the perch in Lake Mendota? Although we can't answer all the questions as yet, we still can put forward the following observations. The perch population appears to be in a very healthy condition, and hatches of perch have been normal since the new regulations have been in effect. In fact, the hatch of 1957 was tremendous, as is shown by the large numbers of smaller fish being caught this winter. Perch this year appear to be biting much better than was the case for the past two winters, probably due to some environmental or food factor, rather than to any sharp difference in supply of available fish.

A perch, like all other living animals, is continually adjusting his life to fit his environment. Thus, if most of the food is on the bottom of the lake, that is where the fish feed. They adjust their movements and feeding habits according to water temperatures, oxygen conditions, light values, currents, and many other things, some of which we may not even yet know. Thus fishery scientists also brave the cold along with the fishermen in order to learn more about the perch.

Last winter Lake Lab research crews operating echo sounders on Lake Mendota found that many schools of perch were swimming at 30 to 50 feet depths over water that was 60 to 80 feet deep, instead of on the bottom. So far this year the perch appear to be staying closer to the bottom. Continuous echo sounding records over a 24-hour period have shown that perch have different movement patterns during the day as compared to the night. These and other findings will allow fishery scientists to understand better the many inter-actions which are affecting the perch population.

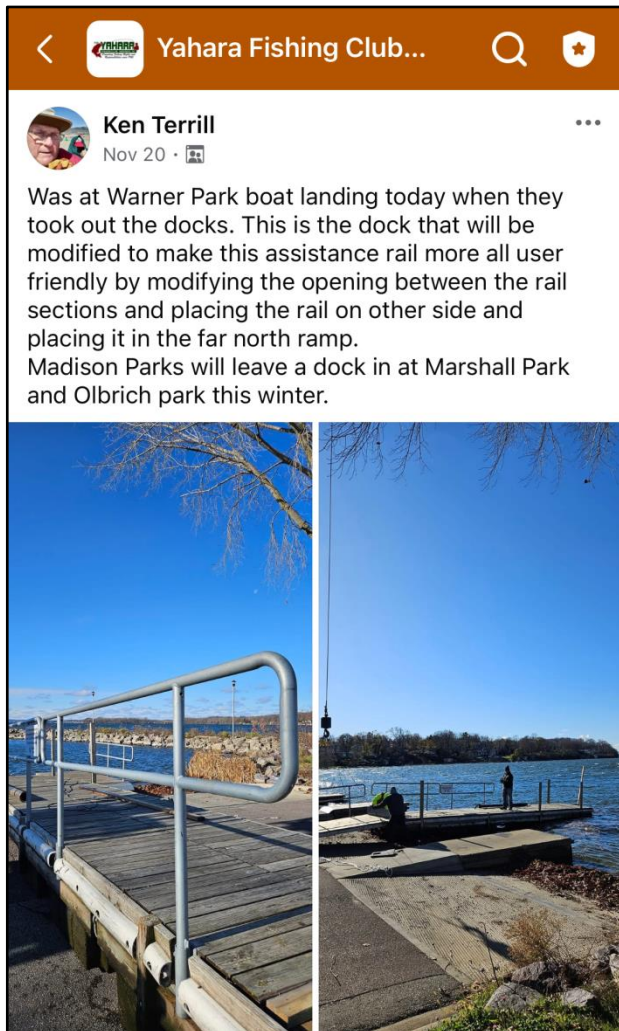
The environment, besides affecting the lives of the perch, also affects the hatch of young fish in the spring. Thus, although the hatch is usually "normal", on occasion a very large hatch occurs and also, infrequently, a very small one. The reasons for this are not completely understood, but probably are a result of weather and food conditions during and after the spring spawning. Thus the success of the perch hatch in any one year is influenced by natural events, and not by the numbers of spawning fish.

All evidence so far strongly indicates that the increased harvest of perch in Lake Mendota is healthy and beneficial not only to the perch population, but also to the recreation of Madisonland's sportsmen.

Here's a link to the complete 1959 Yahara Fishing Club Yearbook, in which the perch article above appeared. The yearbook is a fascinating read (more than a few of our 1959 sponsors are still around!) as we approach 2025, which marks the 80th anniversary of the club.

https://yaharafishingclub.org/Old_Documents/1959yearbook.pdf

From the club's Facebook page:



Notes from the President

By Phil James

Ice season is getting close and so far is looking MUCH better than last year. I was in central Minnesota this weekend and most of the smaller lakes are iced over, though not safe quite yet. The Madison forecast from now to Friday is high of 32, low of 10. In December last year we only had three lows below 28 for the whole month, and we had two lows above 50. Which is all to say that I am getting excited about hopefully having a good year for ice.

While we had great ice for Kids Ice Fishing Day last year, we got lucky to be scheduled on the weekend with the best ice of the year, and a little less anxiety would be nice. I am also looking forward to the prospect of a successful whitefish outing, which is one of our best but has been cancelled the last two years. Put that one on your calendar if you haven't been before. I am also checking over my gear, getting things cleaned and in shape, and of course thinking about what else I "need" to round out my gear. I haven't done a lot of ice fishing outside club events in the past, but I'm working less now so maybe this is the year. All I need is a 4-wheeler, ice shelter, Vexilar, heater, and power auger ... hardly anything. Anyway, I'm hopeful those of you who are already well equipped will be able to get some good use out of your gear this year.

December Holiday Potluck

The December 11th club meeting is our annual Holiday Potluck, and the whole family is invited. Bring a dish to share; drinks will be available at the bar. The meeting will begin earlier than usual at 6 p.m. Paper products will be provided but bring your own dinnerware if you wish.

December Annual Meeting Notes

The December club meeting also serves as the club's Annual Meeting. We will present the Pete Froland Award, announce the club Fishing Contest winners, review the club finances, and elect new Board members. We will be seeking two new members for the Board, so please consider if you would like to help by serving on the Board, or if there is someone you think would be good that you would like to nominate. All Board meetings except for February are conducted by Zoom, so you can participate from the comfort of your home.

Pick Up Expo Raffle Tickets to Sell

Expo raffle tickets are available! This is our biggest fundraiser, and it is important that we have as many club members participating as possible. Pick up books of 10 tickets each from Jim Pankratz, and then before the Expo in February return to Jim any unsold tickets as well as money for tickets you sold – no up-front risk or cost. There will be dozens of prizes, with \$1,000 and \$500 top prizes. Tickets sell for 1 for \$5, 3 for \$10, and 10 for \$20, and they make great Christmas gifts. If nothing else, buy a book for yourself! I won a Lake Erie fishing trip for myself and my son one year!

Kids Ice Fishing Day is January 25th

Put the date on your calendar! There will be flyers available at the December meeting, so take a few and put them up around town where kids and parents will see them. Libraries, doctors offices, schools or day cares if they will let you, groceries, bait shops, etc.

Club Outings

Milwaukee Harbor anytime

If you are interested in heading to the harbor for open water fishing and would like information on how to target brown trout, rainbows or lake trout please contact me.

December outings and the hard water season!

We have a good start with the recent colder weather so look out for a special club email about these outings!

- Local panfish outings when we have safe ice.
- Early ice Mississippi backwaters out of La Crosse when we have safe ice. We'll target perch, bluegills, crappies and more.

Green Bay Do Your Own Whitefish Outings

I plan on making up for shitty ice fishing the last two years by going up to Green Bay and fishing every weekend available with safe ice.

Come along and learn how we catch them in 5-20 feet of water. You would need to be able to walk a few hundred yards on ice but bring your ATV/UTV/snowmobile if you have one.

Sturgeon Bay Whitefish Outing February 7, 8, 9th

With a predicted La Nina winter bringing us a more normal cold and snowy season this is the year to get out on one of our most popular and fun outings! Ride out in covered heated UTVs to heated shacks and test your skills against the tasty and hard fighting whitefish. This is a semi-guided outing with a fabulous and safe group of guides.

Sign up for any of these outings through our club email (yaharafishingclub@gmail.com), at a meeting, or by contacting me by phone or text.

We're a fishing club, let's go fishing together!

Jim Pankratz (608) 709-6442

Club Expo Raffle

We are officially running our Expo raffle again this year as a major fundraiser for our Kids Fishing Day events and need your help! You can buy or take tickets home with you to sell. Tickets will be available at our December, January and February club meetings as well as at the Wisconsin Fishing Expo February 21-23rd. Please contact me if these times don't work for purchasing or returning sold or unsold tickets so we can make alternative arrangements. We could also use your help in soliciting prizes for the raffle. If you have any business contacts or would like to donate a prize for the raffle please let me know.

Thank you for your efforts to support our club!

Jim Pankratz (608) 709-6442

2025 Brings More Mini Sessions

Before last month's club meeting, Stan Nichols presented a mini session on a very practical topic, how to repair fishing rods.



And when we get back to our regular meetings in 2025, there are more mini sessions on the way. Jim Kusuda will discuss perch hanger rigs on Jan. 8, 2025, and Kurt Welke will share his knowledge on How to Prepare a Perfect Shore Lunch on Feb. 13. The mini sessions start at

Club Sponsors

A variety of businesses in the Madison area help sponsor activities of the Yahara Fishing Club, including printing of the newsletter. They also supply goods and services to the angling public. If you are in the Madison area and need something for your fishing trip, please give our sponsors a try.

6 p.m. and wrap up around 6:30, before the regular meetings begin at 7. When additional mini sessions are confirmed, we'll make sure you know about them. Contact Ken Terrill (ken.terrill3011@gmail.com) with ideas for mini sessions you'd like to present!

Be Nice Not Naughty: Renew Your Membership for 2025

It's as good a time as any to renew your club membership for 2025, so bring your checkbook to the Dec. 11 club holiday party. You can provide your payment to new Membership Coordinator Paul Meyer (thanks to Paul for stepping up and taking on this role!). If you have cash and need change, Treasurer Doug Galloway can help. Same prices as recent years – \$35 for individuals, \$45 for families, \$10 for students. Thanks for taking care of this sooner rather than later!





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The Dec. 11th meeting is our holiday potluck at Bowl-A-Vard Lanes

We'll meet at 6 p.m. in our usual place (Arena Room) at Bowl-A-Vard. The whole family is invited. Bring a dish to share; drinks will be available at the bar. Paper products will be provided but bring your own dinnerware if you wish.

Calendar of Upcoming Events

Wednesday, Dec. 11th: Holiday potluck (see above).

Wednesday, Jan. 8th, 7 p.m.: Monthly meeting at Bowl-A-Vard Lanes. Louie Dazzo will speak on spring fishing on Lake Michigan, focusing on the tributaries for salmon and trout. Sounds like a great topic! Mini session starts at 6 p.m. Jim Kusuda will discuss perch hanger rigs. Another great topic!

Saturday, Jan. 25th: Kids Ice Fishing Day

Feb. 7-9: Charlie Grimm Memorial Whitefish Outing in Sturgeon Bay

Feb. 21-23: Wisconsin Fishing Expo at the Alliant Energy Center

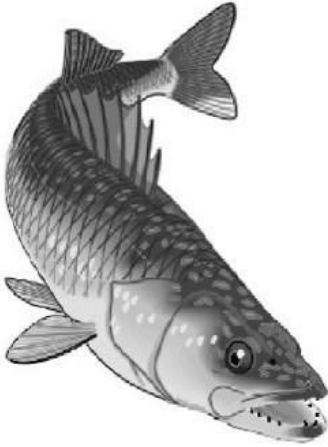
Board of Directors and Officers

**Phil James, President
Tom Harrington, Vice President
Doug Galloway, Treasurer
Matt Camp, Secretary
Jim Pankratz, Outings**

**Gerald King
Jim Krause
Tex Torgeson
Max Shpak
Tom Wilke, Speakers**

**Jim Kusuda
Kim Galloway
Ken Terrill, Mini Sessions
Paul Meyer, Membership**

Yahara Fishing Club
P.O. Box 259803
Madison, Wi 53725



Check out our web page at: www.yaharafishingclub.org

Yahara Fishing Club Membership Form
P.O. Box 259803
Madison, WI 53725

Annual Dues are from January 1 to December 31. Please print. *** ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

Name ***

If Family or Youth, Additional Names

Email *** _____ @ _____

Street Address _____

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