



Hanging up the Bowfishing Gear for the Season? Think Again!

Sure the leaves are turning colors and in some cases have dropped altogether, and many an archers thoughts have long since drifted from the water to the woods, but don't hang up that bowfishing gear just yet! You just might miss out on some of the best action of the season!

Once the days start getting shorter and the water temperatures begin to drop, the thick mats of vegetation that you've been fighting through all Summer to get to the fish start to die and sink to the bottom giving fish far much less cover to nestle down into and hide. Algae blooms are no longer a factor at this time of year either, so water clarity can be great right up until ice-up. On sunny days fish also have a tendency, much like after first ice out in the spring, to move to the shallow, dark bottomed bays to find as warm of water as they can. All of these factors together can lead to some great times on the water in the Fall.

Places to check - Try checking the shallow pockets and bays just off of the first break to deeper water. Fish will move onto these flats to soak up the warmth from the days sun. South facing pockets may have an advantage just because they may get more sun. Water will stay warmer in these pockets well after dark, so night shooting these areas can be a boon at times as well. In river systems, current breaks behind points, islands, or other obstructions are also a great place to check. The slower water will tend to remain warmer than the faster current, drawing the fish for some great shooting opportunities. Small tributary creeks can be another good place to check. The groundwater that feeds these creeks is quite often warmer than the lake water temp making the mouths of these tribs late season hotspots.

Gear Considerations - This time of year can get pretty chilly on the water. Be sure to dress for the weather. Good waterproof gloves are a definite advantage over cold wet hands. I'll even throw a hand warmer or two in my pockets at times when the mercury really drops. Stocking caps and layers are also definitely recommended. If your reel starts icing up.... Well, then you might just consider hanging things up, but you make the call on that!

My last trip in 2006 was a night shoot October 14th. It took a little time to find the fish, but once we did, we ended up with some of our biggest fish of the season! Not to mention the fact that we had the entire lake to ourselves!

Give late season bowfishing a try and you too might get into your biggest fish of the year, and you'll still have plenty of treestand time left before the snow flies anyway!



WBA Member Erik Angove with an albino carp taken from a SE Wisconsin Lake in late August.

New State Record Big Mouth Buffalo Taken

The 8 year standing record for Big Mouth Buffalo set by Mike Paulcheck in 1999 with a 62 pound 1 oz. fish been topped earlier this Spring.

Brandon Gann, of Sparta just edged out the previous record with a fish shot April 23rd on the Wisconsin River. The new record weighed in at 62.60 pounds and measured a whopping 49" long! The fish was taken using an AMS Retriever reel mounted on a Wisconsin made Mathews bow.

Brandon describes how he got his great fish, "It was a warm Spring day and the big female Buffalo were being pushed to the surface by the spawning males. We were working through a shallow area when some males pushed a very large female to the surface. We drew our bows quickly and released our arrows. I was the lucky one to make contact. After a few minutes of fighting the fish to the side of the boat, my friend yelled, "This has got to be a state record"! The action was so good that we stayed until dark. We found a certified scale and confirmed the weight and realized that it was a new Wisconsin State Record." Congratulations Brandon!



Brandon Gann with his State Record (archery) Big Mouth Buffalo. The fish weighed in at 62.60 pounds and was 49" long!