

Q: What do I need to know about using live baitfish in Wyoming?

A: Live baitfish can only be used in select waters in Wyoming east of the Continental Divide. If the water you plan to fish is not explicitly identified in the fishing regulation booklet for live baitfish use, then it is not allowed. Though your annual fishing license allows you to fish statewide, Wyoming is divided into five drainage areas, and the rules for live baitfish are different in each area. The rules include where you can use live baitfish, what types and their origin. To ensure you can use live baitfish for fishing in the water you are planning to visit, consult the Wyoming Fishing Regulations Live Baitfish sections. Also note: Rules on the same water (such as the North Platte) can vary depending where you are.

WILDLIFE



The Columbian sharp-tailed grouse lives in several Western states including Wyoming and Idaho, where this photo was taken. Photo courtesy of Corey Class

LOOKING FOR LEKS

UW scientists learning more about overlooked Wyoming bird

By EVE NEWMAN
even@laramieboomerang.com

Like the greater sage grouse, the Columbian sharp-tailed grouse was one of the dozens of birds and mammals described by Lewis and Clark on their journey through the West more than 200 years ago.

Also like the sage grouse, the once-abundant Columbian sharp-tailed grouse is a species in decline, occupying only a fraction of its historic range because of habitat loss.

“Their range has declined by 90 percent,” said Jeff Beck, associate professor at the University of Wyoming Department of Ecosystem Science and Management.

In Wyoming, scientists know of 27 leks belonging to the bird, one of seven subspecies of sharp-tailed grouse. All the known leks are located in southwest Carbon County near the Colorado border.

But two UW researchers, Beck and Ph.D. student Kurt Smith, are hoping to learn more about the elusive bird’s habits and habitat.

Smith said research on the sharp-tailed grouse is a side project to his Ph.D. work involving greater sage grouse. He was inspired to take up the work after hearing about the bird at a wildlife meeting.

“I didn’t even know that we had any in Wyoming,” he said. “There hasn’t been a whole lot of study at all on these birds in the state.”

Smith secured funding from organizations including the Wyoming Game and Fish Department, UW Biodiversity Institute and Laramie Audubon Society for an initial round of research conducted in spring 2015.

“The whole basis for our research was to try to get a better idea of what the population status is down there,” he said.

Columbian sharp-tailed grouse used to live in nine Western states and British Columbia. Today, three regional groups exist, one of which lives in northern Colorado and southern Wyoming. Smith said research into the Wyoming population was done in the 1960s and 1980s, but little since then.

“We have that information, but it doesn’t answer many of the questions we need to have to really conserve the species,” he said.

For example, scientists don’t know whether the population is stable or how much interaction occurs between birds in Colorado and Wyoming.

See Wildlife, A10

IN THE FIELD

Winter camping can be a challenge in cold weather



Coyote tracks wind through the snow-covered prairie. Wildlife are few and far between this time of year with the exception of some big game winter ranges. Camping on the prairie has its own charm, though, with plenty of elbow room. Photo courtesy of Amber Travskey



AMBER TRAVSKY
CONTRIBUTING
OUTDOORS
COLUMNIST

Wielding a butter knife, I poke through the neck of the water jug and jab at the layer of ice inside. After a couple strong pokes, the ice gives way to the water beneath. I tip the jug over a metal pot and fill it with enough water to make my morning java.

I light my little backpack stove and stare at the pot,

trying to will it to warm up faster. I huddle, wrapped in my down coat, and sidle as close as possible to the little Coleman propane heater that I turned on before starting the coffee.

The heat it puts out isn’t much of a match for the nippy morning air. It’s about minus 10 degrees or so. Still, in a few minutes, the air is warm enough for me to move around so I can put things away and start my day.

I’m camped out in the middle of nowhere on a project site north of Laramie, using the little shell on the back of my truck as a campsite. In my work as a wildlife biologist, I don’t often conduct field work in the winter, but this year, I landed a project where I visit the site and check for wildlife at least once a month for an entire year. I’m halfway through, and it’s been interesting to see the landscape change with the seasons.

Each survey period takes a few days. I could drive to and from the site daily, but each time, I opt to spend at least one night on the site. Not only does it spare me the hassle of driving, but I also relish getting more of a feel for what is going on out on “my” site. Camping makes me more of a participant rather than just a spectator.

There are two downsides to winter camping. First is the obvious: It’s cold. Second is the shorter period of daylight and, thus, the long night. With sunset at about 4:45 p.m. and sunrise not until about 7:30 a.m., that’s a lot of dark. It’s also typically too cold to do much outdoor activity, so winter camping means several hours of holing up until bedtime.

Through the years, I’ve camped in the winter while on multi-day cross-country ski treks. I’ve built snow caves and also pitched tents in the snow. I carried everything I needed in a backpack or pulled it via sled.

By comparison, this work-related camping is much easier because I can bring what I need regardless of weight or size. While my little truck shell is far from palatial, it’s cozy, and I actually enjoy my nights far

See In the field, A10

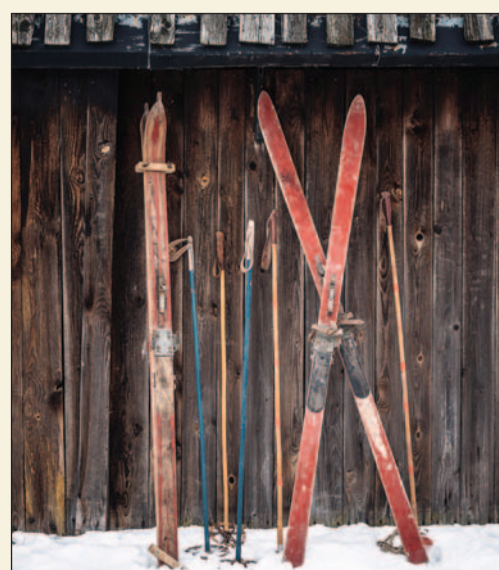
Out and about

Portions of Vedauwoo Glen Road closed

A 1.2-mile segment of Forest Road 700, also known as Vedauwoo Glen Road, is closed to motorized travel for the implementation of the Pole Mountain Landscape Fuels Treatment Partnership, according to the U.S Forest Service. Forest Road 700E is also closed. A closure barricade was placed at the junction of roads 720 and 700. Vedauwoo recreation sites in the area are closed for the season anyway, and the closed road segments are usually inaccessible this time of year because of snow. Work should be finished by June 1. The fuels treatment partnership involves restoration treatments on more than 2,600 acres of state and federal land to reduce wildfire fuels. Call the Laramie Ranger District at 745-2300 for more information.

Pole Mountain Shuffle to kick off 2016 racing season

The Pole Mountain Shuffle Nordic ski race is set for 10 a.m. today starting at the grooming shed on the Campground Loop near the Tie City Trailhead. The event features 5k and 10k courses in freestyle and classic disciplines. Registration is \$10, with race-day registration scheduled for 8-9:30 a.m. today. Go to www.medicinebownordic.org for more information.



Izaak Walton League to meet

The Travelle Chapter of the Izaak Walton League is scheduled to meet at 7 p.m. Jan. 21 at Laramie Fire Station No. 2, 1558 N. 23rd St. Kevin Gelwicks, aquatic assessment team supervisor for Wyoming Game and Fish Department, is set to speak about work being done to recover the Wyoming toad, an endangered species unique to Albany County. Call President Chris Magnussen at 742-4881 for more information.

PARKS AND RECREATION

PARKS AND RECREATION GUIDE:

Go to www.cityoflaramie.org/parksandrec for the latest events and updates, as well as a variety of forms and applications. Be sure to like Parks and Rec on Facebook ([facebook.com/laramie.parksandrec](https://www.facebook.com/laramie.parksandrec)) for useful information and news. Call 721-5269 with questions about Parks and Recreation services.

NOTIFY ME: Want to stay informed about recreation center facility schedules and closures? Go to www.cityoflaramie.org/notifyme and click on Parks & Rec to sign up for automatic notifications via text or email.

ICE & EVENTS SCHEDULE:

Public skate times are as follows:

6:45-8:45 p.m. today
 1:15-3 p.m. Sunday
 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Monday
 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Wednesday
 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., 5:45-7:45 p.m. and 8-9 p.m. Friday
 1-3 p.m., 4:30 p.m.-6:30 p.m. and 7-9 p.m. Jan. 16
 8:45-10:45 a.m. and 1-3 p.m. Jan. 17
 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Jan. 18
 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Jan. 20
 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. and 5:45-7:30 p.m. Jan. 22
 1-3 p.m. and 4:30-6:30 p.m. Jan. 23
 8:45-10:45 a.m. and 1-3 p.m. Jan. 24
 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Jan. 25
 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Jan. 27
 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. and 5:45-7:30 p.m. Jan. 29
 1-3 p.m. Jan. 30
 Upcoming stick and puck:
 2:30-3:45 p.m. Friday
 3:15-4:15 p.m. Jan. 16
 2:30-3:45 p.m. Jan. 22
 3:15-4:15 p.m. Jan. 23
 9:15-10:45 p.m. Jan. 27
 2:30-3:45 p.m. Jan. 29
 3:15-4:30 p.m. Jan. 30
 Upcoming events:

8 p.m. Jan. 22: UW vs. Weber
 7 p.m. Jan. 23: UW vs. Utah State

8 p.m. Jan. 29: UW vs. UCCS
 7 p.m. Jan. 30: UW v. UCCS

CARDIO KICKBOXING: This is a great workout that only takes a few times to get the motions down and feel right at home. True kickboxing is a challenging and fun

cardiovascular workout that will help burn calories like a prize winning kickboxer.

Class times are at 9:30 a.m. Mondays and Wednesdays in Studio A. Orientations for the new class are Monday, Wednesday, Jan. 18. and Jan. 20.

FUN FITNESS CLASSES:

Check out the fall Program Guide for the expanded fitness schedule. Come any day of the week for new class offerings — including water aerobics, Tai Chi, XaBeat, Revolutions, Body Power or Hardcore TBT. There is sure to be a class that fits your schedule and fitness level. New schedules will begin in January and will be posted monthly at the Laramie Community Recreation Center or www.cityoflaramie.org/index.aspx?NID=641.

MAKE A SPLASH:

The Laramie Community Recreation Center is offering Swim Lessons at a discount of 50 percent. Swim lesson fees are: \$18.50 (members) and \$24 (non-members) after the discount, awarded on a first-come, first-served basis. The first session starts Feb. 1-25. Registration is open until Jan. 23. The USA Swimming Foundation's Make a Splash initiative is a national child-focused water safety campaign that aims to provide the opportunity for every child in America to learn to swim. Through Make a Splash, the USA Swimming Foundation partners with learn-to-swim providers and water safety advocates across the country to provide swimming lessons and educate children and their families on the importance of learning how to swim. The USA Swimming Foundation has invested millions of dollars to provide grants to qualified Local Partner learn-to-swim programs, to spread national awareness and to bring together strategic partners to end drowning. To date, more than 2 million children received the lifesaving gift of swim lessons through the USA Swimming Foundation Make a Splash Local Partner network, comprised of more than 600 qualified lesson providers across the nation.

DROP-IN CHILDCARE AT THE RECREATION CENTER:

Childcare is available in the Recreation Center playground area for children ages 6 months-6 years while parents are in the building to work out and attend classes. Sign up for the upcoming week beginning on Friday mornings. Session times are 8-9:15 a.m., 9:15-10:30 a.m. or 10:30-11:45 a.m. Mondays-Fridays. The member cost is \$3.50 for an hour or \$4.50 for the full 1.25

hour session. Call 721-5269 for more information or to reserve a spot.

RECREATION CENTER PARTY PACKAGES: Party Packages are available from noon-2 p.m. or 3-5 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays and must be scheduled at least 10 days in advance. Stop by the front desk of the recreation center to schedule a party. All Party Packages require a \$300 deposit.

Party Package No. 1 costs \$56 (\$60 for non-members). This package is the most economical option and includes room rental for one hour and 10 recreation center admissions. Bring party supplies and use our conference room or multi-purpose room for a party.
 Party Package No. 2 costs \$148 (\$156 for non-members). This is a great option if for party activities. Choose one of the following:

The Sports Package includes a party host to coordinate sports-themed activities (i.e. basketball, dodge ball, kickball, pickle ball, soccer, volleyball), two-hour room and gym court rental, 10 recreation center admissions, two pizzas and drinks. If there are more than 10 guests, additional admissions, pizzas and drinks are available for an extra fee.

The Indoor Pool Package includes a party host, two-hour room or outdoor pavilion rental, 10 admissions for swimming in the eight-lane and leisure pools, two pizzas and drinks. If there are more than 10 guests, additional admissions, pizzas and drinks are available for an extra fee. Pool policies and rules found in the program guide apply to all pool party packages.

Party Package No. 3 costs

\$205 (\$222 for non-members). Party Package No. 3 is the most "custom" party option. A party host will contact you in advance to develop a theme. You can choose between the Sports Package or the Pool Package (detailed above).

In addition, the Sports Package can include the Bounce House inflatable (12 and older) in the gym, and the Pool Package can include a choice of the Octopus Fun Run (younger than 8) or the Aqua Challenge (8 and older) in the pool. Also included are a two-hour room rental, 10 recreation center admissions, two pizzas, drinks, party decorations, party favors, a balloon bouquet and tableware for 10 guests. If you exceed 10 guests, additional admissions, pizzas, drinks, and party favors are available for an extra fee.

SUMMER SENIOR OLYMPIC GAMES:

The Parks and Recreation Department recently announced the Summer Senior Olympic Games for the state of Wyoming will be hosted in 2017 and 2018 in Laramie. The games are hosted in conjunction with the National Senior Games and are scheduled in both summer and winter. Winter Games for the 2015-2016 season are in Cody, and the Summer Games in 2016 will be in Sheridan. The Senior Olympic Games have been in Wyoming since 1987, and twice previously, the Summer Games have been in Laramie. The staff of the Parks and Recreation Department will be working during the next six months to develop volunteer committees to assist with events, promotions and the opening and closing ceremonies. The activities will present opportunities for event sponsorships and volunteer activities. Call Recreation

Community forest news

Several different types of organisms feed on trees. Insects and fungi are common symbiotic teams in attacking and feeding on trees sometimes to the point of killing the tree. Another deadly duo, specifically attacking pine trees, combines pine sawyer beetles and microscopic nematodes "roundworms", both in the animal kingdom.

The pine wood nematode, *Bursaphelenchus xylophilus*, is the cause of pine wilt disease. The vectors for pine wood nematodes are pine sawyer beetles, *Monochamus* spp. The non-native Scots, Austrian and less commonly mugo pine, are primary trees attacked and killed by the nematodes. The pine wood nematodes are thought to be native. Native pines can be attacked, but most may not show symptoms of attack and most do not die from the nematode attack. The Scots and Austrian pines attacked and killed by the nematode are mostly in South Dakota, Nebraska and Kansas. To-date pine wilt disease has not been found in Laramie or in Wyoming.

The pine sawyer beetles are round-headed wood borers (long-horned beetles). The term long-horned comes from the length of the adult beetle's antennae, often considerably longer than the beetle itself. When the beetle feeds on the young branches of a healthy pine or lays eggs in a dying or dead pine, the nematodes, carried in the beetle's respiratory system, leave the beetle and enter into the tree at the feeding and egg laying sites. The nematodes mature, feed and lay numerous eggs inside the tree. The nematodes can mature from an egg into an adult in five days under ideal laboratory conditions. The feeding action of the nematodes and the numerous nematodes themselves cause air pockets in the water transport system which decreases or halts water conductivity in the tree. Along with other negative effects, several caused by the nematodes, the pine tree needles rapidly wilt and turn brown from the top of the tree down and remain on the dead tree. Several months of hot, dry weather are necessary for the development and spread of the nematodes and pine wilt, which could put Laramie into a less successful location for pine wilt disease. When the nematodes are not feeding on cells in the tree they feed on fungi in the wood including blue-stain fungi, which is commonly transmitted to the tree by bark beetles. Research indicates that when blue-stain fungus is also used as a food source for nematodes there is an increase in nematode reproduction. Article sources: <http://www.apsnet.org/edcenter/intropp/lessons/nematodes/pages/pinewilt.aspx> https://fs.usda.gov/Internet/fse_documents/stelprdb5262952.pdf.

Contact City Arborist Randy Overstreet at roverstreet@cityoflaramie.org or 721-5338 for tree questions or more information.

Manager Jodi Guerin at 721-5259 for more information.

CITY PARKS: Parks staff will be taking down the holiday lights and working on updating the trash can lists for all city parks and trails. With the recent snow and cold weather, be advised some sections of park paths and the greenbelt might have slick and icy conditions. Staff will inspect paths on a regular schedule and mitigate those spots if possible. Contact Parks Supervisor Scott A. Hunter at 721-5257 or shunter@cityoflaramie.org for more information.

MOSQUITO CONTROL:

City staff will be presenting details and cost analysis of the proposed changes in mosquito control operations for the 2016 season at the Wednesday meeting of the Parks, Tree and Recreation Advisory Board. Additionally, the proposed changes will be discussed at a City Council work session at 6 p.m. Jan. 26 in City Council Chambers at City Hall, 406 Iverson St. Contact Mosquito Control Supervisor Keith Wardlaw at 721-5258 or kwardlaw@cityoflaramie.org for more information.

GREENHILL CEMETERY FACTS AND TIDBITS:

Continued from last week's history lesson: The large obelisk almost directly opposite the cemetery office on the south side of the main road on Row A marks the graves of Charles (1844-1885) and Augustus (1841-1906) Trabing, who arrived in Laramie on June 18, 1868, and operated Trabing Commercial Company, with locations, variously, in Medicine Bow, Rawlins, Fort McKinney, Buffalo, and Laramie. Additionally, they kept contracts to furnish wood and hay for the Union Pacific Railroad, and owned the TB Ranch north of Medicine Bow.

Following an 1898 fire that destroyed the downtown store, Gus built a smaller store, and later re-entered ranching, held contracts to deliver mail, and was the proprietor of stage lines to Centennial and Sybille and Walden, Colorado.

In the next several weeks, we will visit the resting places of some of Laramie's finest citizens — and some of her shadiest. We will be highlighting particular citizens and telling their stories. If you are not familiar with Greenhill Cemetery or you are simply interested in some of the history, this is a good place to start.

More about the beginning of Greenhill Cemetery and some of Laramie's finest and unique residents will be featured in future Parks and Recreation news. Contact Cemetery Crew Leader Loni Wilson at 721-5268 or lwilson@cityoflaramie.org for more information

PUBLIC MEETING NOTICE:

The Parks, Trees and Recreation Advisory Board meeting is at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday in the large conference room at the Laramie Community Recreation Center, 920 Boulder Drive. Also, a special meeting of The Parks, Tree and Recreation Advisory Board is scheduled for at 6:30 p.m. Jan. 20 in the multi-purpose rooms at the recreation center to consider the City's requests for Albany County Recreation Board Grants.

The meetings' locations are wheelchair accessible, and accessible parking spaces are available. Requests for special accommodations or interpretive services must be made 24 hours prior to the meeting. Call Inez at 721-3572 for more information.

Wildlife

Continued from A9

The bird has twice been petitioned for listing as an endangered species, and it's on the Game and Fish's list of Species of Greatest Conservation Need. The list includes species whose status warrants management attention either because of known threats or because not enough is known about its status.

"Given the small size of their population in the state, they're definitely a species that deserves some attention," Smith said.

Smith described the Columbian sharp-tailed grouse as a generalist, as it lives in sage brush, mountain brush and grasslands.

Using what they knew of the bird's habitat preferences and known lek locations, Smith and Beck mapped areas — more than 100,000 acres — where

they thought leks might occur, hoping to discover more. Then they conducted ground surveys and used an infrared camera from an airplane to hunt them down.

The ground surveys turned up six more leks. The aerial surveys didn't reveal any new sharp-tailed leks, though the scientists did find four potential new sage grouse leks.

Smith and Beck are hoping their work in spring 2015 serves as a starting point for more inquiry. The next step could be putting tracking collars on individual grouse to monitor their movements, habitat use, nesting success and survival rates. Beck said agencies such as Bureau of Land Management and Game and Fish are interested in collaborating.

"The sage grouse has everybody's attention, but there are so many other species that deserve some focus as well," Smith said.

In the field

Continued from A9

from any city lights.

The little Coleman heater I use is at least two decades old. It puts out enough heat to at least take the nip out of the air. It's especially useful in the evenings when it's dark so early. I read, do crossword puzzles and generally just relax in the evenings with the heater allowing me to do so in relative comfort.

I also use a rather large battery-powered lantern to provide plenty of light. I don't feel so claustrophobic when I have more light. I also add a headlamp for reading.

Typically at about 8 p.m., I don my cold weather gear and head out for a walk. The snow squeaks as I meander just a short distance, then pause to look up at the sky.

Sometimes, I pull out a planisphere, a circular map

of the sky that adjusts to the month, date and time. It helps me identify constellations.

Tonight, it's a bit too nippy to linger, so I just look up and admire the Milky Way before scurrying back to the warmth of my truck.

Back in my little hidey hole, I set up for the night. Due to potential harmful fumes from the propane heater, it remains off through the night. This time of year, I use two sleeping bags so I'm plenty warm and cozy. Aside from an occasional coyote howl, there is utter silence, unless the wind kicks up.

Getting out of that warm sleeping bag in the morning is tough, especially when it's below zero. On this morning, it's so cold that even my tube of sunscreen is frozen.

I emerge from my camper just in time to catch the intense red and orange sunrise. The prairie is a sea of snow and

cold. Hoarfrost clings to the grass blades and sparkles when the sun clears the horizon.

The sky is mostly clear, and it promises to warm up to a high near 20 degrees. Compared to the last few days, that's a veritable heatwave.

I note movement in the distance and spot a coyote looking my way.

"Good morning," I say, as he turns and trots the other direction. I bet he, like me, can hardly wait for warmer weather.

Amber Travskey earned master's degrees in wildlife biology and exercise physiology from the University of Wyoming. She runs her own environmental consulting company, as well as a martial arts school. She authored "Mountain Biking Wyoming" and "Mountain Biking Jackson Hole," both published by Falcon Books. She is the tour director and founder of the Tour de Wyoming bicycle tour, which crosses the state every July.