

# OFAH ZONE "H" report for BPSA Stu Paterson - October 2020

**“opinions expressed in this report are not necessarily those of BPSA, its members or directors”**



## **Cormorant Hunt**

Ontario's new CORMORANT HUNT is getting positive reviews from OFAH members and directors. Most have seen the damage these birds can do. Cormorants are not only destructive, and messy, they consume large quantities of fish, negatively affecting our recreational fishery.



Wayne Forgrave, chair of the Ontario Federation of Anglers & Hunters Zone H, which includes Grey-Bruce, said the hunt (September 15-December 31) is long overdue.

“The cormorants are in ludicrous numbers and they are actually destroying properties, trees and they are also devastating sports fishing stocks.”

Former OFAH President John Ford, agreed, saying the hunt is a good control measure for the prehistoric-looking birds, which he has no doubt have impacted the local sports fishery.



A 2019 survey of cormorant nests on the Great Lakes indicated there are at least 143,000 breeding pairs of the birds in 344 colonies across the province.

The Ford government says it wants “to continue studying cormorant populations and will support the sustainability of cormorants in the province.”

Jack Osadzuk of Owen Sound, who served nearly 20-years on the OFAH board, said some shorelines and highlands in Ontario, including in parts of Grey-Bruce, have been denuded by cormorant colonies.

Osadzuk said “cormorants are widespread now. At one time, eastern Ontario was about the only place you would see them and now you see them by the thousands migrating through places like Pelee. If you get a flock of 500 or 600 cormorants landing in a little bay, they can pretty much wipe out any fish stocks that is in that bay.”



Cormorants have destroyed trees at Harrison Park, he said, and gobble up young fish released for the sports fishery by BPSA and the Sydenham Sportsmen's Association.

OFAH resource management specialist Lauren Tonelli says the provinces cormorant hunt is not the final answer to cormorant overpopulation. She said “We continue to seek added management actions that will contribute to cormorant control where hunting or discharge of firearms is restricted such as some provincial parks, national parks and municipal waterfronts.”



Critics of the fall harvest note that by mid-September, most of the birds have flown to their southern winter feeding locations.

Tonelli says “A small fall harvest will not be enough to adequately reduce the damage that cormorants cause provincially, but is a recognition that something needs to be done and gives individuals a means to begin to reduce local concerns.”

The Owen Sound Sun Times story on the cormorant hunt noted that, as was expected, there is not unanimous support for this hunt.

<https://www.owensoundsuntimes.com/.../ontarios-cormorant...>

We continue to ask for your CORMORANT HUNT stories and photos for use in future OFAH reports for BPSA. Please send them to [bpsportsmen@gmail.com](mailto:bpsportsmen@gmail.com)

OFAH and its publication Ontario Out of Doors have prepared a well-researched “to do list” on cormorant hunting. Some of the advice to hunters includes working to maintain public support for this hunt.

OFAH says **“Every hunter has a responsibility to be an ambassador. These practices will help maintain public support:**

- Be aware and considerate of shoreline property owners and recreational users in the water before setting up. Maintain a safe distance.
- Pick up your shell casings.
- Do not litter.
- Communicate with shoreline property owners if possible. Let them know what you are doing and the benefits of the hunt.
- Quickly dispatch and retrieve every bird. The worst image we can present is dead cormorants washing up on shorelines.
- Think twice before shooting near wetlands just prior to events like the opening day of waterfowl seasons or if recreational users are passing by.
- Respect private property and a landowner’s right to feel safe on their property. Set up a respectful distance away, unless given permission to hunt closer.
- Explain the benefits of the hunt to those interested.”.....

Read more on HOW TO HUNT CORMORANTS:

<https://oodmag.com/how-to-hunt-cormorants/>

OFAH has endorsed a community college study of cormorant carcasses. You can take part. Dead birds can be donated to the college under the authority of a Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNR) salvage permit.

More info here..

<https://oodmag.com/cormorant-carcasses-sought/>



## Wild Pigs

Our Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters (OFAH) is working with the province on the wild pig/boar issue. We do not want to see populations of these nasty animals spread and become a huge problem as they have in many US states.

Some wild pigs have been spotted near Tobermory and in several other locations in and around Grey-Bruce.

### Hunting wild boar:

Wild boar may be considered 'wild by nature'. If MNRF cannot identify who owns the animal, it may be hunted under the authority of an Ontario Small Game Hunting License.



The Ministry is asking the public to report wild pig sightings. Sightings will play a critical role in understanding the locations and number of wild pigs in the province and will help establish future management. Sightings can be reported to the iNaturalist Ontario Wild Pig Reporting, or via email to [wildpigs@ontario.ca](mailto:wildpigs@ontario.ca) and to [bpsportsmen@gmail.com](mailto:bpsportsmen@gmail.com)

This is the latest from OFAH on this issue.

<https://www.ofah.org/issues/wild-pigs-in-ontario/>

### FUTURE ZONE H OFAH Meetings

*From Wayne Forgrave, Chair OFAH Zone H*

"All Zone H meetings have been cancelled until further notice due to PANDEMIC 2020 and Covid 19 distancing requirements. However zone executive members are working on creating a virtual meeting on ZOOM. We are doing our best to keep all 11-thousand zone H members informed."

I hope to take part in that meeting via Zoom. The next OFAH board meeting will determine if we have a new federation President and executive. There was no election for executive positions during the OFAH annual meeting which was staged online.



See my June 2002 report <http://bpsportsmen.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/OFAH-July-2020.pdf>

## CHP AWARD



Photo left to right. Kelly Lang President LHFC, Rob Hare OFAH President, Matt Burley CHP coordinator. It happened at OFAH headquarters. The Lake Huron Fishing Club (LHFC) President Kelly Lang accepted a prestigious award on behalf of the 37 members of the Ontario Community Hatchery Program which includes BPSA. The award was from the Canadian Wildlife Federation (CWF). The honour recognized "outstanding conservation work completed by affiliate members during the previous year". The Hatchery Program is an affiliate of the CWF.

Province wide, hundreds of CHP volunteers put in 93-thousand volunteer hours a year raising, feeding and stocking more than 7-million fish. The Wildlife Federation praised CHP for “providing financial and technical support to small Ontario community fish culture stations enhancing angling opportunities and species rehabilitation efforts. Over seven years, the program has expanded its funding and outreach to community-run hatcheries: in 2019, it distributed \$150,000 in provincial operational and capital improvement grant funding to organizations from 37 communities that engaged 1,085 volunteers. Together they raised and stocked eight million walleye, chinook & coho salmon, rainbow, brook & brown trout, into public waters in Ontario. They did species restoration work with lake trout, Atlantic salmon and muskellunge. The hatcheries and the volunteers are the true winners of this award.”



Read more about CWF awards here  
<https://cwf-fcf.org/en/explore/awards/>

Our BPSA President praised the Community Hatchery Program after a recent brown trout stocking session.



Kevin Harders reported on the October stocking by masked volunteers of 12,000 brown trout in Wiarton Marina. He related how a small group of BPSA members, working under Covid-19 Provincial guidelines, completed this fall stocking and also graded the remaining fish at the BPSA hatchery “to accommodate for better growth.”

He said “This was yet another successful day of fish stocking. Thank you to our small group of volunteers .... for making this happen.” He noted BPSA operates the longest running community hatchery program in Ontario and “is always grateful to the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters and the Community Hatchery Program for all of their generous support to our program here on the Bruce Peninsula.”



More than half of the cost of operating our Wiarton based hatchery is covered by the CHP. The Hatchery Program is funded by the Province and operated by the Federation of Anglers and Hunters.

OFAH has announced that hatchery manager Jake van Rooyen of the Bluewater Anglers, has won the Gord Blake Conservation Award for “outstanding efforts towards stewardship, conservation and promoting sports fishing.” Like BPSA the Bluewater club also belongs to the Community Hatchery Program.



His zone executive nominated Jake for his “efforts and commitment that helped pave the way for hatchery success.... his meticulous nature and dedication to his clubs hatchery proved he was a perfect fit for this award. Jake van Rooyen headed a Sarnia hatchery that raised and released 150,000 Chinook Salmon each year for the last 35 years and another 50,000 Rainbow Trout in each of the last five years.”

At its hatchery the Bluewater Anglers maintain a public viewing and feeding area which attracts 3,000 people a year to see first-hand the experience related to how a hatchery operates.

## Big Fish File

We all love seeing big fish. How about this one a 32.4 pound chinook that won Phil Payne of Toronto the top prize in the 2020 Lake Ontario Salmon Hunt. Payne won \$2,000 for the week's biggest catch and an added \$4,000 for the Overall Big Fish Award. He also captured the Salmon Masters title and its \$1,100 prize along with a life-sized replica.

By the way several BPSA members are pushing for a return of our club Spring Derby for members and guests. Stay tuned for news on that possibility.



## Hunter Education Online

OFAH reminds us that Ontario residents can complete Hunter Education via the Internet. This course will provide you with the accreditation to hunt with a bow. If you wish to hunt with a gun you must also have federal firearms accreditation (e.g. a PAL). If you have not previously taken the Canadian Firearms Safety Course (CFSC) you will need to complete the CFSC when courses become available.

This temporary online option to complete the Ontario Hunter Education Course requires students to complete the Saskatchewan online hunter education course, review course content online specific to Ontario (such as the Ontario Hunting Regulations Summary) and complete the Ontario Examination virtually with an Ontario Hunter Education Instructor.

Please Note:

This will NOT permit you to hunt with a gun (unless you already have proof of firearms accreditation, such as a PAL or Minor's License). This is a temporary plan. Once face-to-face gatherings can safely resume, the Ontario Hunter Education Program will resume in-person classes.



The option is for Ontario Residents only

The temporary online/virtual option for hunter education is available until further notice – click here for details

To find out how to register and complete the course visit:

<http://ohep.net>

Fishing, hunting, trapping and sport shooting are often viewed as only having heritage or recreational value. Research by OFAH shows these heritage activities are important to millions of Canadians. We spend billions of dollars, taking part in these activities making an enormous impact on our economy.

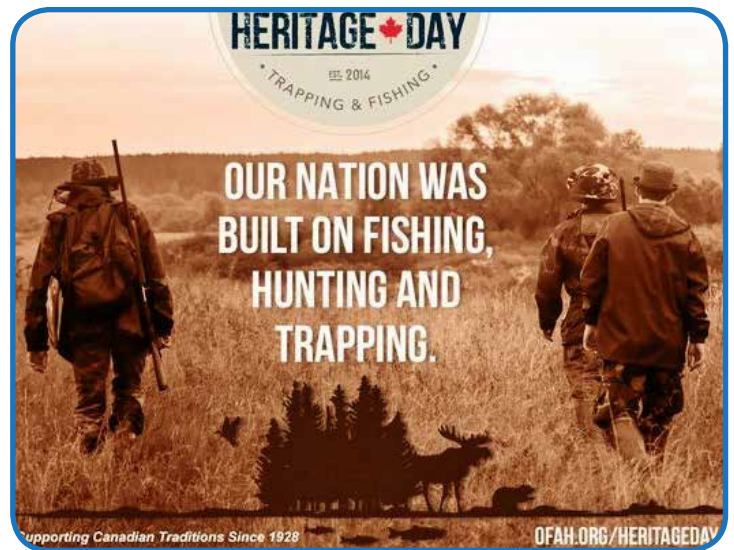


**OFAH study highlights:**

2.97 million Canadians fish, 1.27 million hunt, 45,000 trap, 1.4 million participate in sport shooting  
\$18.9 billion in total spending  
\$13.2 billion to the Gross Domestic Product (0.6% of Canada's economy) these outdoors pursuits support nearly 107,000 jobs worth \$6.4 billion - boosted federal and provincial tax revenue by \$6.1 billion in 2018

So the next time someone questions the importance of our hobbies you will be able to give them some of these facts.

Many of us took time out on September 19th by wearing camo to celebrate National Fishing, Hunting and Trapping Heritage Day.



OFAH and many other outdoors groups endorse this special day.

**From OFAH head office: “Hunters, trappers and anglers are a huge part of Canada’s heritage and economy. Every dollar spent on hunting and fishing licenses in Ontario is re-invested to fund Conservation Officers, fish stocking, wildlife surveying and more! We thank each and every one of you. Wear your camo proudly!”**

That’s all for now. Please practice safe social distancing! Hopefully you will still be able to get out on or by the water or in a blind or tree stand to practice what we love....fishing and hunting, our HERITAGE PURSUITS.  
Stu Paterson reporting on OFAH for BPSA

*Files from OFAH, Paterson Media, Postmedia, Ontario Out of Doors, John Hafner Photography*

