

OUTDOORS

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Baudette man faces numerous charges, fines, and restitution

DNR STAFF REPORT

A Baudette man faces more than a dozen charges and heavy fines and restitution for illegal bear and deer activities, ending an investigation by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

During Minnesota's fall bear hunting season, state conservation officer Robert Gorecki of Baudette located an active bear bait station belonging to alleged bear guide Keith R. Slick, 32, of Baudette.

Conflicting statements led to a search of Slick's home where numerous bear capes and skulls, as well as deer antler sets were seized. "There were no possession or registration tags found with any of the bears. The bears did not have any cuts in their ears that would indicate that a site tag was attached at any time in the past," Gorecki said.

A check of DNR records indicated that Slick had never registered an adult

male deer or bear in the past 10 years. DNR records only go back 10 years.

A cell phone seized in the investigation contained pictures of Slick with a dead bear. Numerous text messages were also found with Slick telling people about the bear he had shot. Other text messages from Slick stated that he had shot seven bears in his life.

Only two of the six antler sets recovered had site tags on them, but from individuals other than Slick.

"Mr. Slick had multiple unexplainable deer racks," Gorecki said. "A third set of antlers were from an unregistered road-killed deer, and he was unsure where the remaining sets of antlers came from."

Slick was charged Nov. 1 in Lake of the Woods County Court with two counts of possessing an over limit of bear, three instances of unlawful possession of deer, two gross misdemeanor charges of unlawfully transporting a bear (mandatory

court appearance), failure to register a second bear, failure to tag a second bear, illegal possession of a car-killed deer, untagged big game animal (bear), no bear outfitter/guides license, unlawful transfer/lend or borrow of license, failure to register bear bait stations, hunting within 100 yards of an unregistered bear bait station, and placing bait for bear without a license. There were other violations, but the statute of limitations had expired on them.

Slick faces nearly \$4,500 in fines and restitution. A firearm and bow were also seized during the investigation. If convicted, Slick's hunting privileges could be revoked for three years.

Slick is scheduled to appear in Lake of the Woods County Court in December.

Anyone witnessing a fish or wildlife violation is encouraged to contact the 24-hour, toll-free Turn In Poachers (TIP) hotline at 800-652-9093. Cell phone users can dial #TIP.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Bear capes and skulls were seized by a DNR conservation officer during an investigation in Baudette. The suspect faces nearly \$4,500 in fines and restitution, had a firearm and bow seized, and could have his hunting privileges revoked for three years if convicted.



Six sets of antlers confiscated by the DNR during an investigation in Baudette. The suspect faces nearly \$4,500 in fines and restitution. He's scheduled to appear in Lake of the Woods County Court in December.

COMMON LOON



High winds on Rainy Lake a couple weeks ago ruffled the feathers of this adult common loon after its pre-migrataion molt, reports photographer Mike Thiele. Thiele notes that adult loons usually leave weeks before the hatch year young are ready. He told The Journal that banding studies indicate that the adolescent loons will migrate, on their own as loons do not migrate in groups, over a route they have never flown and end up usually within a very short distance from their parents. "How can they do this?" Thiele wonders. "Mystery to me."

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

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Lyn Bruce & Family

We cannot thank you all enough for all of the monetary donations, room payments, food, cards and prayers. All of your help has been so very appreciated and helped us through the hardest part of this journey. You are all so special to us. My aortic aneurysm and valve have been repaired and now I have a lot of work to do with getting my strength back and Dr's trips. Most importantly I am alive.

Thank you all again.

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