

# OUTDOORS

## CALL OF THE WILD

The Journal welcomes ideas for stories about people in our community who have a unique hunting, fishing or outdoors tale.  
**Call the Journal at 285-7411**

### LOITERING WEASEL



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Elaine Goulet, County Road 24, shot this photo recently of a weasel that has been hanging around her residence. Goulet said she believes it is making its home for winter under this pile of stuff. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources website states ounce for ounce, weasels are fierce predators. They are excellent mousers, and are efficient at raiding mouse nests. A unique reproductive aspect of most members of the weasel family is the process of “delayed implantation.” Weasels mate in the period from late summer to mid-winter. The embryos resulting from fertilization undergo an initial development of about two weeks. Then, a long dormant period occurs during which the embryos remain free in the uterus. After this delay, the embryo becomes implanted in the uterus and development resumes. The young are born in the spring about a month after the delayed implementation occurs.

## Learn wilderness survival basics before going afield

### DNR STAFF REPORT

A missing duck hunter near Mille Lacs Lake forced to spend the night in the woods is a good reminder that anyone spending time outdoors should know wilderness survival basics, said an official with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

A recent news release from the Crow Wing County Sheriff’s Office said that 76-year-old Glenn Huff of Garrison had become disoriented while hunting and was unsure of his whereabouts. Rather than wander aimlessly, Huff then “hunkered down with his dog for the night, and at first light started to make his way back to his vehicle.” The following morning Huff and the dog met up with sheriff’s office deputies who reported Huff in excellent condition following the incident.

“That incident is a good reminder that anyone can get lost in the woods, including hunters,” said acting Capt. John Paurus, DNR enforcement education pro-

gram coordinator.

Panic is an enemy for those who get lost. They should remember the acronym S.T.O.P.

■ **SIT:** They should collect their thoughts and realize they are not lost; they just can’t find camp or vehicle.

■ **THINK:** What do they have at their disposal both physical and mental that can help them in this situation? Inventory survival kit and start to develop a plan.

■ **OBSERVE:** Look around, is there shelter, water, an open area where searchers could see them?

■ **PLAN:** Create a plan of action. Pick a spot that to build a fire for heat and signaling. In addition, can the spot provide basic shelter?

A basic survival kit can be packed into a quart zip-lock bag and should contain the following:

■ **Basic shelter materials:** Two 55 gallon garbage bags and 30 feet of braided mason’s line.

■ **Means to start a fire:** Disposable lighter, waterproof matches or matches stored in a waterproof container, or 10 feet of toilet paper or Petroleum Jelly soaked cotton balls in a waterproof container.

■ **Means of signaling:** Whistle, signal mirror (could be an old CD). A fire is also a signal.

■ **Means of knowing direction:** A compass.

■ **Comfort food:** Food bar, nuts or trail mix.

Anytime people head outdoors they should plan for the unexpected and be prepared to spend the night in the woods. Here are some musts before heading out.

■ **Always let someone know the destination and return plan.**

■ **Carry a compass or GPS and know how to use it.**

■ **Carry a basic survival and first-aid kit.**

■ **Carry a cell phone.**

■ **Check the weather and dress for it.**

These outdoor safety tips are part of the DNR hunter education firearms safety program. An online study guide for hunters and outdoor enthusiasts is on the DNR website. Click on HunterCourse.

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Ordered and paid for by Kooch DFL, Darlene Carlson, Assoc. Chair, 509 3<sup>rd</sup> St. Int'l Falls, MN

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