

Winter 2020



Alberta Hunter Education  
Instructors' Association

# Conservation Education

The Voice of Conservation Education in Alberta

Magazine



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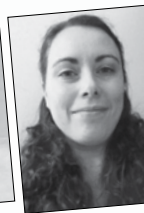
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All the very best for a  
happy and healthy New Year  
*from the*  
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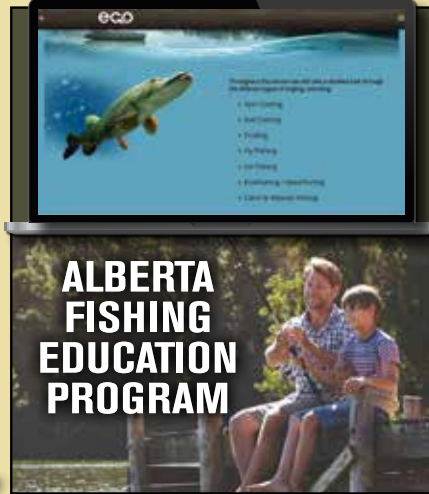


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Go to our website and click on "online training" to launch these programs, view demos or sign up.



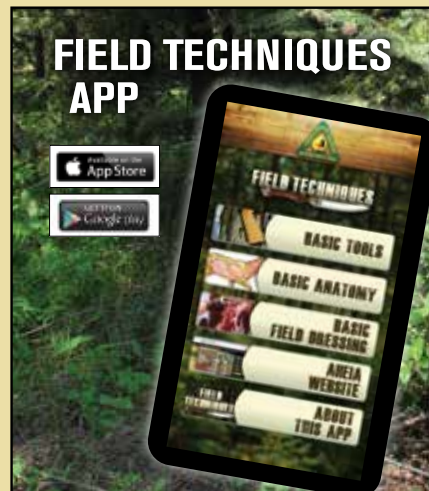
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## President's Message

By Robert A. Gruszecki



Bob Gruszecki  
President - AHEIA

As this, our last quarterly magazine for 2020, reaches you, it is our wish that you and your families are healthy as we move into the new year with renewed hope and inspiration.

Who could have possibly guessed a year ago that the COVID-19 pandemic would so dramatically affect how we live our daily lives, and words such as bubble, masks, asymptomatic and quarantine would now be part of our common language? The challenges of how we live, work and interact have been everchanging, yet with the vaccine distribution now underway, the light at the end of this health crisis tunnel seems a little brighter. I have been inspired and encouraged by the amount of understanding and generosity of our members, sponsors, donors, and the public that support our cause. I continue to be hopeful that peace and good health is afforded to all of you!

We at AHEIA are excited and optimistic about the future. We are anxious, like everyone else, to shelve the restrictions on our programs, and we anticipate their return to full capacity. The possibility of this may still take some time, but rest assured, those days will come back. In the meantime, we continue to provide a variety of Conservation Education programs to Albertans while working on new offerings, scheduled for release in early 2021. Our online program delivery continues to grow and diversify, which offers

continued learning and connection to this cause while restrictions are in place. Our online offerings provide lots to do and are being utilized by teachers and shut-ins at the highest rate in our history. Check out the plethora of our offerings at <https://bit.ly/2JZtmzv>.

We are currently developing two new workbooks in our O.W.L. Series: *The Sandhill Crane* and *Alberta's Deer: Identifying the Differences between Mule Deer and White-Tailed Deer*. If you are new to hunting, it can be difficult to identify certain animals in the field, especially at a distance or when they are partially hidden. These workbooks will provide additional information supplemental to our existing courses about recognizable differences between species and the tools to help to ensure a mistake is not made. This winter we will also be releasing a free, online *Game Fish Identification Quiz*. This has been a work in progress for a full year and we believe this state-of-the-art Fish Identification Quiz is the best available reference and learning tool of its kind, anywhere! This self-assessment will test your knowledge in identification of common game fish species in Alberta lakes, rivers, and streams, and will be a great accompaniment to our accredited Alberta Fishing Education Program. The best part is the exam will be "free" and can be taken as many times as desired, with a different slate of pictures and questions each time to facilitate maximum learning.

Due to current gathering restrictions, we will likely now be holding AHEIA's Annual General Meeting online. Although the platform has not yet been decided, the meeting will take place prior to March 31, 2021. Please watch our social media feeds and website in the new year, to

learn how to join in the event. This will be a great opportunity for people to stay up-to date with the new year's planned direction of AHEIA and show support for the organization.

We were disappointed to learn that the Calgary Boat and Outdoor show, scheduled for February 2021, will be cancelled. By attending sportsmen shows, AHEIA can showcase our world-class Conservation Education programming to Albertans with the help of our valued volunteers. We have not yet heard if the Red Deer or Edmonton shows will take place, but if they do, we will be contacting our volunteers in hope that they can help us promote AHEIA at these events. We are always grateful for the time our volunteers provide, and should you be interested in offering assistance or knowledge, we encourage you to contact our Calgary or Edmonton offices.

Social gathering rules and regulations also forced the cancellation of our Annual WISE Awards and Banquet and presentations. We will not be awarding the WISE presentations this year, but will eagerly re-install it when health authorities allow. In the meantime, watch for news of an online auction that will be taking place early in the new year, allowing people who would normally have attended the banquet, the chance to contribute to our cause online. There will be a wide array of items available to bid on, with much needed proceeds going directly to Conservation Education program delivery.

Having cancelled our summer camps and most events at our Alford Lake facility this past year, we are eager for them to resume in 2021. Book-

Continued ➤





## President's Message *cont.*

ings for the coming year are very brisk and we look forward to serving camp participants again soon. In anticipation of the return of summer camps, planning for the Youth Hunter Education Camps, the Outdoor Youth Seminar, and Outdoor Women's Program has already begun. Dates for these events are listed on our website calendar and we encourage you to put your name, or your child's name, on the 2021 notification lists. Email [edmontoninfo@aheia.com](mailto:edmontoninfo@aheia.com) for the youth programs and [info@aheia.com](mailto:info@aheia.com) for the Outdoor Women's Program. We are very hopeful that this summer we can once again introduce people to the outdoors through educational experiences at this wonderful facility.

This past fall we concluded our best-ever fundraiser—the 100 for \$100 Raffle. Many thanks to the many donors, sponsors and ticket purchasers for the loyal support. The winning ticket list is still posted on our website at [aheia.com](http://aheia.com). The funds generated have helped us through these economically challenging times of severely re-

duced donations, which we rely on so heavily to keep our doors open. We have already begun working towards our next 100 for \$100 Raffle and have also launched six new raffles for 2021. We encourage you to watch our social media feeds and our website for new raffle announcements, and contact our Calgary or Edmonton offices to purchase tickets.

We were incredibly happy when the Calgary Firearms Centre re-opened this past summer following restrictions, as were the many people who took advantage of the shooting activities at the facility. Youth and Women's Shotgun Leagues have become extremely popular, and the 2021 session dates are already posted on our website. If you are interested in trying this fun sport, or advancing your shooting skills, we encourage you to give it a try. Our qualified coaches provide excellent training so you can quickly enjoy safety and success at target shooting. We are excited to be hosting several competitive shooting events in 2021 as well, including the Provin-

cial Trapshooting Championships in July. Should facility access be restricted during events, the information will be posted on our website and social media feeds as well as at the facility.

Conservation Education is a powerful and wonderful cause, and instills the value of our Province's wild spaces in our students. With over 110,000 Albertans taking AHEIA's various programs every year, we strive to ensure that these wild spaces will be available to future generations to enjoy, as we do now. As we collectively look towards better days to arrive, the knowledge that AHEIA continues to educate Albertans is a comfort and that this shared, difficult time for all of us, shall pass.

Wishing you all better, safer and rewarding days ahead. Cheers!

Yours in Conservation,



Robert A. Gruszecki  
President of AHEIA



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### Front Cover Photo:

Fred Noddin

## Alberta Hunter Education Instructors' Association Annual General Meeting

The AHEIA AGM will take place prior to March 31, 2021  
and most likely will be held online.  
Please watch our website and social feeds  
for updated information.

Please stay tuned!

-  [www.AHEIA.com](http://www.AHEIA.com)
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The Conservation Education WISE Foundation and  
Alberta Hunter Education Instructors' Association

## 2021 WISE Awards and Banquet

Due to COVID-19, our annual WISE Awards  
and Banquet has been cancelled for 2021.

Watch our social media feeds and announcements  
as we are investigating the option of a  
Virtual Event for the same time period.

We are looking forward to  
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**"The focus of the mentored hunt program is on learning how to hunt, not necessarily harvesting an animal."**

## Mentored Hunts 2020

By Allan Orr



Allan Orr  
Assistant Conservation  
Education Coordinator  
AHEIA Red Deer - South

One of my favourite activities in the fall is taking new hunters out for their first deer. AHEIA's Mentored Hunter Program is, to my knowledge, unique in Canada in that we are able to obtain for new hunters, antlerless mule deer or white-tailed deer licences, normally obtained only through a draw. The idea behind the mentored hunt program is to

pair a new hunter with an experienced hunter who can show them the ropes, so to speak. The pairings are usually one-on-one but, depending on the mentor, the hunter, and the type of hunt, it may be more of a group effort.

During the fall of 2020, I took out eight new hunters to a couple different areas. We were one-on-one with COVID protocols strictly adhered to. We are fortunate to have nearly exclusive access to a patch of land that is almost literally overrun with white-tailed deer, and the landowner is more than happy to have us go there and take a few does out of the herd. Over the years we have built up a good relationship with the landowner, and when we stop for a short visit after the hunt, he is almost as excited for the new hunter as the hunter is!

Other mentored hunt programs around Alberta gave opportunities to over 20 new hunters, meaning that there were at least 30 people exposed to hunting for the first time this fall. I'm sure the number is much higher, but of course, we don't hear about everyone who takes a new hunter hunting. It would be good to hear from you though, as we report numbers like these to the government so they can see that hunting, and the hunting lifestyle, is important to a growing number of voters in Alberta.

The focus of the mentored hunt program is on learning how to hunt, not necessarily harvesting an animal. As any hunter knows, not every hunt ends up with fresh blood on their overalls. I tell my hunters that if everyone harvested an animal every time they went out, we would call it shopping, not hunting. A successful hunt by this program's standard is having a new hunter come away with a positive experience and a desire to learn and do more.

I am pleased to report that there are a couple of organizations that organize their own mentored hunts. They find the hunters, the mentors, and the land access, and put everything together for their own program. AHEIA provides support in the way of accessing the licences and providing insurance coverage through memberships. All mentors must be AHEIA members in good standing, but the new hunters do not need to be members. AHEIA and/or the sponsoring organization can, in most cases, provide firearms, ammunition, clothing, and even a ride to the hunting site ... COVID rules notwithstanding.

**"A successful hunt by this program's standard is having a new hunter come away with a positive experience and a desire to learn and do more."**

Another mentored-style hunt for novice hunters occurs in Taber each fall and is part of the Taber Pheasant Festival. This year, the two-day novice hunt gave almost 100 novice/new hunters an opportunity to shoot up to two pheasants. AHEIA provides training on-site to everyone who wants to shoot a pheasant or two. Once the shotgun coaches are confident in the shooters' ability to hit a clay target, the shooter is sent to the pheasant field for a chance to try to harvest a pheasant with a trained, experienced mentor. Nearly all shooters go home with two pheasants thanks to the diligence of the mentors. At the time of writing, the 2021 dates are not official, but it is traditionally held the third weekend in October, just prior to the Taber Pheasant Festival itself.

AHEIA is always looking for people to partake in this program, particularly mentors and land to hunt on. If you have a desire to see our hunting heritage protected and enhanced, get involved and take out a new hunter.

If you as an individual or as an organization would like to be involved in AHEIA's Mentored Hunt Program, contact us at [info@aheia.com](mailto:info@aheia.com).





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# Firearms Education Report

“We surely are living in interesting times.”

By John Morrissey



John Morrissey  
Firearms Education  
Coordinator  
AHEIA

As we wind our way into our winter season, COVID-19 protocols continue, not only in our daily activities, but also with the CFSC/CRFSC programs. Despite these obstacles, the number of students attending the CFSC/CRFSC programs across the province remains strong. Instructors across the province continue to deliver the programs with COVID-19 protocols in place and, from speaking with instructors, students appear to be respectful of these new protocols.

While at one of the local indoor shooting ranges, it was mentioned that they are seeing a number of new PAL holders who are not demonstrating good muzzle control on the range. Also, it was noted some were arriving with their restricted firearms not properly secured with a trigger lock or in a locking case. Whether this is a case of a new shooter who needs a mentor, or students were not paying attention during their classroom sessions, it is still concerning. As instructors and mentors, we need to reinforce the requirements for not only transporting a restricted firearm, but also transporting non-restricted firearms, as we are now into rifle hunting season. Locking devices are relatively inexpensive compared to a possible court appearance!



As we are now in the sixth month of the May 1, 2020 Order in Council Firearms Prohibitions, confusion and questions still arise as to what firearms have been prohibited. For a quick reference to the RCMP Firearms Reference Table (FRT), see [www.armalytics.ca](http://www.armalytics.ca). Armalytics provides data exploration and analytics for firearms-related data in Canada, including the Firearms Reference Table (FRT).

As noted in my Summer issue *Firearms Report*, the Judicial Challenges relating to the validity of the May 1, 2020 OIC are proceeding. As well, there are a number of Section 74(1) hearings scheduled across Canada as a result of the nullification of registration certificates of previously restricted firearms that, as a result of the OIC, have now been deemed to be prohibited. We surely are living in interesting times.

In other news, the Province continues to press forward with a provincially-run firearms office

and the appointment of a Chief Provincial Firearms Officer (CPFO). By the time this article goes to press, the committee will have reviewed the online survey as well as completed the November 17 and 23 virtual town hall events. To quote the press release: “This engagement will help the committee develop recommendations on how the province of Alberta can better assert itself in areas of provincial jurisdiction. Alberta’s long history of responsible firearms ownership by law-abiding citizens deserves respect; so do Albertan’s property rights. The committee will also make recommendations on how a Chief Provincial Firearms Officer can strengthen the administration of the firearms program to improve services for gun owners.”

The release continues to advise an implementation team be set up to oversee the transition to the provincial firearms office, as well as to start the process to identify a suitable Chief Provincial Firearms Officer (CPFO).

The target to have the Provincial office operational is the summer of 2021. Given the CFSC/CRFSC and the curriculum are federally mandated, I cannot foresee any changes to the program itself. However, we may see some administrative changes once the provincial firearms office is up and running.

In closing have a safe holiday season, and remember to take time for family and friends.



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**Update  
Regarding the  
COVID-19  
Pandemic**

In light of the Global COVID-19 Pandemic, AHEIA may be forced to postpone or change the dates of our programs and events.

Please check with us to confirm any of the program or seminar details you see in this magazine.





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## Edmonton Report

“ We are optimistically looking forward to seeing the return of all of our very popular events in 2021. ”

By Len Gransch



Len Gransch  
Program Coordinator  
AHEIA  
Red Deer - North

We are still struggling with the COVID-19 pandemic and, as I write this, our office is still under lockdown and we continue to follow procedures to keep instructors, clients and staff safe.

To that end, we have implemented certain safety protocols and processes for all instructors who pick up their orders at our office. All orders are now picked up at our back door at #87. When you place your order you will be given choices on what time you wish to pick up your order (on a first come first served basis). Your pick up time is reserved for you alone to ensure safe social distancing. Also, every effort is made to ensure all orders and gun kits are properly sanitized prior to you picking them up. We appreciate your patience during these trying times.

We are optimistically looking forward to seeing the return of all of our very popular events in 2021.

The 2021 Youth Hunter Education Camps are scheduled to run July 4-9, July 11-16, July 18-23 and July 25-30. Our 2021 Outdoor Youth Seminar will run August 20-22. Of course, these events will be held at our remarkable Alford Lake facility west of Caroline.

Our Alford Lake facility will once again be back on track to host the September 25, 2021 Provincial Hunting Day event. Historically, the fourth Saturday of every September has become a special date within Alberta. The Alberta Government declared this day each year to be Provincial Hunting Day, with the first annual event being held in 2007. Next year's event will take place on Saturday, September 25. It will mark the fourteenth annual event, and is a reminder to all Albertans of our hunting heritage, and of the importance of securing a future for wildlife and wild places, especially within our province. This event has become extremely popular as a family outing.

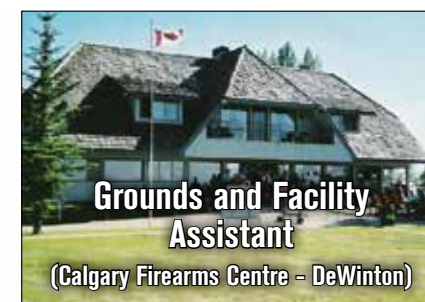
Registration forms for the Youth Hunter Education Camps, the Outdoor Youth Seminar and Provincial Hunting Day will be available in the New Year. They will be available at all of our facilities and for download on our new and improved website [www.aheia.com](http://www.aheia.com). To get added to our notification list simply email your request to [edmontoninfo@aheia.com](mailto:edmontoninfo@aheia.com) and we will look after the rest.

Our 2021 annual Spring Fling fundraising banquet will be held on June 3. Tickets are available now and can be purchased by contacting our Edmonton office toll free at 1-866-282-4342 or by email at [edmontoninfo@aheia.com](mailto:edmontoninfo@aheia.com).

*Take care, be safe  
and enjoy  
the Great Outdoors!*



**Assistant  
Conservation Education  
Program Coordinator**  
(Edmonton)



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**“Have you tried rabbit hunting?  
Did you know rabbit and hare may be hunted,  
but not trapped, without a licence throughout the province,  
at all times of the year?”**

# Expanding Your Outdoor Activities During the Pandemic



Snowshoe Hare



Cottontail Rabbit

By Len Gransch



Len Gransch  
Program Coordinator  
AHEIA Red Deer - North

COVID-19 has “sucked the wind out of the sails” of many of us. During this time it is critical that we find ways of being productive while still remaining safe.

If you were fortunate enough to be able to get out hunting this year it was likely a very positive experience, regardless of being successful or not. Hunting is great for your system, providing exercise, safe comradery and, best of all, a giant boost for your mental health.

Once big game hunting season ends, we should consider opting in for other less common pursuits.

Have you tried rabbit hunting? Did you know rabbit and hare may be hunted, but not trapped, without a licence throughout the province, at all times of the year? The cottontail rabbit, snowshoe hare and white-tailed jackrabbit are the three types of native rabbit and hare in Alberta.

The jackrabbit hare’s long, powerful hind legs allow it to leap farther and run faster than the other two species of rabbit. Jackrabbits are typically found in mixed farmland, but not restricted to these areas. They range in size from three to four pounds.

Cottontails can be found in abandoned homesteads and yards, woodlots, and brush piles. They like to stay hidden in brush piles or thick clumps of grass, especially in cold winter months. In winter they will often travel along trails that they have packed down, making it easier to locate them. They range in size from one to two pounds.

Snowshoe hares are typically found in more northern settings with conifer trees and swamps. They will hide out under low-hanging spruce branches



White-tailed Jackrabbit

and browse on twigs. Snowshoe hares are typically larger than cottontails and can weigh three pounds or more. They get their name from their exceptionally large snowshoe-like hind feet.

Fortunately you don’t require much hunting equipment for hunting rabbits. If you already hunt or pursue any type of outdoor activities during the winter you will be good to go as far as clothing is concerned. Dress for the conditions and the degree of activity.

You will not require any specialized firearms for your pursuit of the “was-cally wabbit”. Most any gauge of shotgun will work nicely, but the preferred would be a .20 gauge or .12 gauge. Go for #5, #6 or #7½ size shot. Some rabbit hunters prefer using a .22 LR firearm, which also works very well. Most hunters will already have one of these firearms.

Now, where to locate your quarry. If you are already a big game hunter, the areas you already hunt in would be perfect places to begin. Look for telltale signs of their presence: Well-used rabbit trails, droppings, urination spots, signs of them foraging for food, and tracks. Hunting with trained dogs can simplify the process, but most of you will not have this option. Dogs are beneficial, but not necessary.



Rabbit droppings.

Field dressing your rabbits while they are still fresh makes the process much easier. Start by removing the hide. Make a shallow cut along the circumference at the first knee joint of both hind legs. Now cut from the knee joint through the skin towards the genital area and back up to the other knee joint. At this point you can basically start peeling the skin away from the carcass. Work your fingers under the skin and peel towards the head of the rabbit. When you get to the tail, use a knife to cut through the tail bone. Once separated, grab the hind legs in one hand and start peeling the skin down with your other hand. Once you get to the front legs, push the legs through the hide. The paws will remain attached to the legs and the hide should detach without having to cut it. Once the hide gets down around the neck, you can use your knife to remove the head. If you have them, utilize poultry shears or pruning shears to remove the paws. If not, your hunting knife will work.

Place the carcass on its back and carefully insert the knife from the genital area to the ribs. Be careful not to puncture the intestines, as you can contaminate the meat. Carefully remove the stomach, intestines and other organs. Cut around the diaphragm to remove the heart and lungs, etc. Time to enjoy your harvest.

Enjoy your extra time in the outdoors.

Some game birds, like grouse and pheasant, are open until January 15. Check the 2020 Hunting Regulations for WMUs with extended seasons.

There are also other hunting opportunities available. Refer to pages 58 and 59 in the 2020 Hunting Regulations.

For example: Magpies, crows (if the crows haven’t flown south already), raccoons and coyotes.



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These projects are undertaken with the financial support of Wildlife Habitat Canada.

Wildlife Habitat Canada is a non-profit, conservation organization that conserves habitat, primarily by investing the funds from the sale of the Canadian Wildlife Habitat Conservation Stamp and Print program contributed by waterfowl hunters. Since 1985, we have provided over \$50 million in grants to more than 1,500 habitat conservation projects across Canada, which have helped safeguard important ecosystems and countless wild species. To learn more, please visit [www.whc.org](http://www.whc.org).

*Without habitat ... there is no wildlife.*

**Making Wildlife and Fish Part of the  
Value System of all Albertans.**



“Reducing poaching and improving an angler’s ability to identify native trout species is a key area of focus.”

# Making a Splash for Alberta’s Native Trout

Submitted by Alberta Environment and Parks

Atabasca rainbow trout, bull trout and westslope cutthroat trout are three native trout species that have been calling Alberta’s cold, clean, and clear waters home for thousands of years. They are an integral part of healthy functioning ecosystems, as well as providing subsistence, recreational, tourism and economic opportunities. Alberta’s native trout living in their limited habitats in the east slopes of the Rocky Mountains are threatened by the three H’s: Habitat loss and degradation, Hybridization, and Harvest.

Habitat loss and degradation are caused by past and ongoing land uses of all kinds, from infra-

structure development to recreation, adjacent to, or across, the watercourses they inhabit. This can result in a direct loss of habitat, which results in less habitat which supports fewer fish. Stream crossings like culverts, roads and some bridges may also limit or prevent fish migrations and restrict access to spawning grounds, which is referred to as fragmentation. Development activities impact water quality as erosion results in sediment entering the stream, creating silty water and increasing nutrient loads. Silty (or turbid) waters have negative impacts on trout nests (called redds) as sediment settles on newly laid eggs, and restricts availability to the clean, oxygenated water needed for embryological development and survival.

As a result of past fish stocking and changes in habitat conditions, such as increasing water temperature, the chance of native trout spawning with closely related non-native species is increasing. Hybridization alters genetic traits linked to the long-term resilience of native trout populations, and increases the risk of losing these native species entirely. Even experienced biologists cannot identify hybrids with much certainty as there is a wide range in the degree of hybridization. If you catch a fish and you aren’t certain of its species, let it go!

Reducing poaching and improving an angler’s ability to identify native trout species is a key area of focus, as these species are listed as endangered or threatened under the federal Species

at Risk Act. Anglers can help keep these fish in our future by improving their fish handling skills, which will increase the survival of caught and released fish.

With all of these challenges facing our native trout, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada has provided up to \$4.9 million over the next four years through the Canada Nature Fund to support native trout recovery in Alberta. This funding will be cost matched by Alberta Environment and Parks and a collection of partners including Alberta Conservation Association, Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society – Southern Alberta Chapter, Cows and Fish, Trout Unlimited Canada, and the fRI Research Water Program.

We’re working with these organizations to support on-the-ground habitat restoration, watershed assessments, species management planning, restoration stocking, and increased education and awareness about native trout and the threats they are facing. We’re also improving and making the information on native trout identification and handling more readily available. Because of these partnerships and the staff and volunteers that support them, native trout are getting the helping hand they deserve!



“ As a result of past fish stocking and changes in habitat conditions, such as increasing water temperature, the chance of native trout spawning with closely related non-native species is increasing.

Hybridization alters genetic traits linked to the long-term resilience of native trout populations, and increases the risk of losing these native species entirely. ”

## How You Can Help Native Trout:

- Be a responsible angler by learning to identify your catch and keeping fish wet while releasing them.
- Don’t fish in extreme temperatures (both heat and cold)—this causes extra stress to the fish!
- Keep your wheels out of water while recreating on your OHV.
- Join a stewardship group and help restore a riparian area.
- Report aquatic invasive species using AISC’s EDDMaps Alberta App.
- Use the ABWCI App to document impaired stream crossings.



Stream bank restoration.



Fish trap on Tay River.



Photo Credit: Blair Reilly



“Long before I started fly fishing, or had even heard of it, I discovered these odd looking ‘lures’ in my Granddad’s tackle box.”

# Pistol Pete:

## A Simple and Deadly Fly Rod Lure

By Jeff Smith



Jeff Smith

Fly-fishing is a sport that doesn’t have to end with the onset of cold weather. By adapting your choice of flies to the colder temperatures you can often fish well into the Winter months.

A good example of this is choosing to fish with deep running streamers and wet flies. A bit of flash and extra movement are often all it takes to bring a lethargic trout to life on a cold day!

Long before I started fly fishing, or had even heard of it, I discovered these odd looking “lures” in my Granddad’s tackle box. He was a pretty serious pan fish and bass fisherman, deadly with the bait-caster rod, but he also fly-fished. These odd looking lures consisted of a large single hook with a tail of long chicken hackles, a yarn or chenille body over wound with a large hackle of a contrasting colour. In front of all this material was a large metal blade in various shapes.

I remember trying to cast these things with a stiff old bait caster. There just wasn’t enough weight on the line to cast these things. It wasn’t until a few years later that I learned they were a type of lure or fly designed to cast with a fly rod.

Some years later I came across some flies which were oddly familiar in an old tackle shop. They looked very much like a Woolly Worm, but there was a propeller on a clevis and/or a bead where the head would normally be. I picked some up and at some point gave them a try. Well, did they ever work! A bit of investigation led me to the name Pistol Pete.

Now, before going any further, we need to be clear on something here. These flies will not win you any friends on the snootiest of trout waters. Places where the trout and the client know one another by name and have been known to discuss which fly they will possibly rise too. Slow moving spring creeks come to mind as do some lakes managed for trophy trout. But if you don’t mind odd looks and not being invited to sip the latest white wine with lunch, these flies will trick the wariest of trout.

I’m really not sure, though, why they are not well received in many places. Today’s fly fisher carries flies with beads and cones attached to the front of the hook, many of which are readily acceptable on the fanciest of creeks. I suspect, though, this dislike relates to the fact that historically, many fly rod lures were the domain of the bass fisher. Yet, while researching this article I came across references to the Pistol Pete having originated in southern Colorado as a trout fly. Here, in the area of their design, they are most often used in streams and rivers of moderate flow. As well, they can be trolled very effectively behind a canoe or similar watercraft.

In flowing water the fly is cast up or down stream and retrieved. You need to impart action to the fly so the propeller spins, giving the fly a very active appearance. Quickly strip your line in as though retrieving a spinner on that sort of tackle. In slower water, find a deep cut under-bank on a bend and toss it in there. The current that is most often present in these areas will sweep the fly deep under the bank where big, wary trout hang out. In very heavy, deep water, you can add the required amount of weight to your leader, though this will resemble the infamous chuck ‘n duck cast.

The original Pete is a combination of the venerable Woolly Worm with an added bead and propeller. Today you will see all sorts of flies called Pistol Petes as the bead/propeller can be added to Woolly Buggers, many different streamers, as well as some larger wet flies. When I tie a Pistol Pete streamer, I prefer to use a small cone in place of the bead. This allows the propeller to spin freely and still balance the fly. Beads look good on wet flies, cones on streamers. I have got to admit, these things look darned gangly, and you are tying a fly on a hook that is too long for the traditional tie.

I am a John Gierach fanatic; he lives the fly fishing life to the fullest and shares his stories through a number of very entertaining books. In *Another Lousy Day In Paradise* there is a chapter called *Folk Art* where he describes what is a hilarious meeting between his buddy Larry and a couple who are serious about their spring creek atmosphere and a yellow Pistol Pete. Priceless stuff!

In all seriousness though, it wouldn’t hurt to carry a few of these flies tucked away in your vest, as I have come to learn over the years, you just don’t know what might save a day of trout fishing. And they are as much fun to tie as they are to fish with.

While beads and cones are easily found in most every fly tying shop, you may have to look around for propellers. A shop which carries spinner and lure making supplies will have them or they can be found on-line. Due to the commonly tied sizes of 4-6, you will want to purchase propellers in medium and large sizes for Winter flies.



## Pistol Pete Tying Steps

### Photo 1

Form a small bump of thread behind the hook eye.

Coat with Sally Hansen’s Hard As Nails nail polish.

Next, slide the propeller and bead onto hook.

### Photo 2

Position propeller and bead against thread bump so propeller sits upright.

### Photo 3

Attach hackle by the base of the feather stem behind bead.

### Photo 4

Tie in tail material.

Tail should be approximately as long as the gape of the hook.

### Photo 5

Tie in rib material.

### Photo 6

Tie in and wrap body material forward.

### Photo 7

Reverse palmer the hackle.

### Photo 8

Wrap rib to behind head and secure.

## OLIVE PISTOL PETE

**HOOK:**  
3XL size 4-6

**PROPELLER:**  
Silver Nickel size medium

**BEAD:**  
Copper 5/8

**THREAD:**  
Olive 6/0

**TAIL:**  
Golden Olive Ice Fur

**RIB:**  
Gold oval tinsel

**BODY:**  
Olive Sparkle Chenille

**HACKLE:**  
Olive Saddle



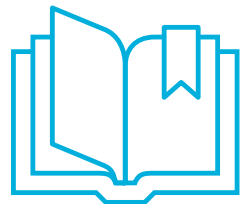
Completed fly.



# Fish Handling Tips

## for Ice Fishing

### KNOW BEFORE YOU GO!



#### CHECK THE REGULATIONS FOR:

- fishing season & common species identification
- bait bans & gear restrictions
- catch and size limits

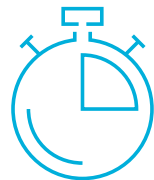
Download your licence on the Alberta ReIm App for easy access.



#### GRAB YOUR GEAR

- first aid kit
- gloves & pliers
- measuring board
- nail clippers or knife
- ice auger
- lures
- extra clothing
- camera

### KEEP FISH WET



If a fish must be removed from the water, minimize the time it is out of the water. Never place the fish directly on the ice.



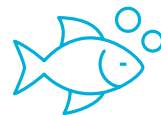
Exposure to freezing air temperature and human touch will damage the gills and eyes. Do not touch them or squeeze the fish!



Use a measuring board down the hole in the ice, to determine if the fish is legal to keep. For fish being released, remove the hook, while the fish is in the water, without touching it.



If taking a photo, get your camera ready while the fish is still in the water.

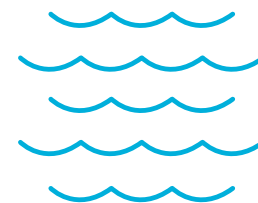


Gently release headfirst. Allow them to swim away on their own.

**Proper fish handling increases the chances they will survive, grow, and reproduce. We all have a role to play to keep fish in our future!**

# Ice Fishing Safety

Keep yourself, other anglers, Alberta's fish and their habitats safe while ice fishing



#### AVOID

ice near open water and be extra cautious on river and stream ice.



#### LOOK

for signage warning of thin or weak ice

**NEVER**  
walk on ice less than  
**10cm**  
**THICK**



#### NEVER

drive on ice less than  
**30cm**  
**THICK**



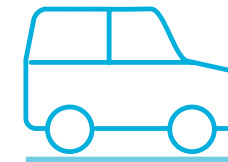
Label ice huts and remove on or before March 31<sup>st</sup> (March 15<sup>th</sup> in Fisheries Management Area PP1).

#### DRIVE SLOWLY

#### KEEP SEATBELTS OFF

#### OPEN YOUR WINDOW A CRACK

#### HALF UNLATCH YOUR DOOR FOR QUICK OPENING.



#### IF YOU FALL THROUGH THE ICE:

- Exit your vehicle immediately.
- Crawl on your belly on the ice, spreading your weight. Use nails or spikes for added traction.
- Find a warm place and dry clothes as quickly as possible!





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## Accessing Agricultural Crown Land

**Before entering onto agricultural leased crown land, you must contact the leaseholder.**

Detailed maps, leaseholder contact information and access conditions for leased land are found on the Recreational Access Mapping Tool through the Environment and Parks website.

**Leaseholders may limit or deny access if:**

- You are not on foot
- Livestock are present in the field
- A crop has not yet been harvested
- You wish to discharge a firearm or use explosives near livestock
- A fire ban is in effect
- You wish to camp
- You wish to hunt unreasonably close to livestock in a fenced pasture

**When on agricultural crown land, be courteous and remember to:**

- Pack out litter and do not damage land or property
- Park vehicles so they do not block lease access
- Leave gates as they were found
- Ask leaseholder permission before lighting a fire

**Failing to follow these regulations can be costly, with a penalty of up to \$500.**

For more information, please visit [alberta.ca](http://alberta.ca) and search 'recreation on agricultural crown land' or call 310-3773.



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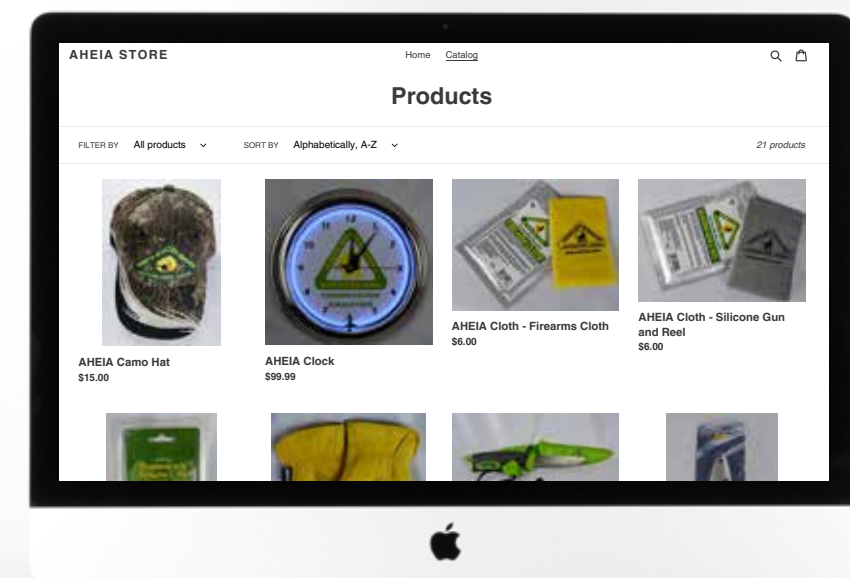
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# Great Meals

from the

# Harvest

with Len Gransch



Len Gransch  
Program Coordinator  
AHEIA Red Deer - North

## Fried Walleye

4 boneless/skinless walleye fillets    2 large eggs, beaten  
1/2 cup all-purpose flour    1/2 teaspoon garlic powder  
Salt and pepper to taste    2 cups saltine crackers, crushed fine  
Canola oil for cooking    1 lemon, cut in wedges

Cut fillets into portion size. Crack eggs into a shallow bowl, beat and set aside. Combine flour, garlic powder, salt and pepper in a shallow bowl and mix to combine. Pour the crackers in a separate shallow bowl. You are now ready to dredge.

Heat oil in a deep fryer or deep skillet over medium-high heat to 375°F.

Dip fillets into the flour mixture, then the beaten eggs, followed by the cracker crumbs. Set aside on a plate. Repeat the process until all pieces are coated.

Double check oil temperature and carefully lower fillets into hot oil. Do not crowd the fish, but rather do it in batches. Transfer cooked fish from the oil to a paper towel-lined plate. Repeat the process until done.

Serve with your favourite rice dish, vegetable of your choice and lemon wedges.

**Tip:** When crushing crackers place them in a large Ziploc bag. Crush using a rolling pin, glass jar or bottle.

## Corned Venison

2 cups water    6 tablespoons Morton Tender Quick\*  
1/2 cup brown sugar    4 1/2 teaspoons pickling spice  
1 tablespoon garlic powder    6 cups ice cold water  
5 pounds boneless venison shoulder roast    1 teaspoon red pepper flakes

Bring the 2 cups of water to a boil in a saucepan over high heat. Stir in curing mix, brown sugar, pickling spice, garlic powder and red pepper flakes. Stir until dissolved. Remove from heat.

Pour the 6 cups of ice cold water in a 2-3 gallon container and stir in the spice mixture. Place the venison roast in the prepared brine, cover and refrigerate. Leave the venison in the fridge to brine for 5 days, turning the meat over daily.

To cook, rinse the meat well, place into a large pot, cover with water. Bring to a boil, reduce to medium-low. Cover, simmer for 4 hours. Add more water if required to keep the roast covered.

Remove roast from pot, tent with foil and allow to rest for 30 minutes prior to slicing. Boiled potatoes, carrots and cabbage make a perfect companion, along with a cold beer.

This recipe also works very well with elk, moose, or bison.

\*At times Morton Tender Quick is hard to find. Our friends at High Caliber Products stock this item. Pick up or order online <https://highcaliberproducts.com/contact-us/>.

*Enjoy!*



## Conservation Education Points of Contact

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Fax: 403-252-3770  
[info@aheia.com](mailto:info@aheia.com)

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**Conservation Education Centre For Excellence**  
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1-866-282-4342  
Fax: 780-431-2871  
[edmontoninfo@aheia.com](mailto:edmontoninfo@aheia.com)

**Alford Lake**  
**Conservation Education Centre For Excellence**  
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Phone: 403-722-2423  
Fax: 403-722-2445  
[alfordlake@xplornet.com](mailto:alfordlake@xplornet.com)

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Pleasure Craft Operator Training

“... the easiest way to clean skulls with the least amount of shrinkage.”

# Bleaching Skulls

By Len Gransch



Len Gransch  
Program Coordinator  
AHEIA Red Deer - North

For all of you who are interested in such an endeavour, Boone and Crockett had this recipe in their *Fair Chase* magazine. It will ensure the easiest way to clean skulls with the least amount of shrinkage.

This recipe has worked great for me over the years and is relatively easy.

*Good Luck!*



Photo Credit: Matthieu Deuté

Moose skull.



Photo Credit: [www.flickr.com/photos/nugunstinger](https://www.flickr.com/photos/nugunstinger)

Bear skull.

- 1 Remove as much of the flesh as possible from the skull and the lower jaw. Clean out the brain cavity.
- 2 Obtain a metal container large enough to hold enough water to completely immerse the skull (a large canner works very well as long as the better half does not see what you are using it for!).
- 3 Mix one teaspoon of Arm and Hammer Washing Soda per gallon of water. Heat solution until water is steaming, but **do not allow** it to come to a boil.
- 4 After about 15 minutes much of the remaining flesh will be loose. Remove the skull and scrape as much of the loose flesh as you can from the bone with a table knife.
- 5 Place skull in the solution for another 15 minutes, cleaning the remaining flesh. It usually only takes a couple of times, but may require more depending on the skull and how much flesh you initially cleaned.
- 6 I have also used an air nozzle to help clean the small bits of flesh remaining, as well as the brain cavity and veins (watch for splatter).
- 7 Bleaching works best immediately after cleaning. Immerse the skull in drugstore strength hydrogen peroxide in a plastic container. Remove the skull when it turns a creamy white color (usually takes 2-3 hours). **Do not leave it in any longer!**
- 8 After the bleaching process, the skull needs to be de-fatted. Rinse the skull off and place it in hot tap water. This process will remove the fats and oils from the skull.
- 9 Repeat with clean, hot water solution every 20 minutes for three immersions.
- 10 Allow the skull to dry.
- 11 If you want the skull officially measured for any of the record books, except SCI, the skull must wait for 60 days from the date it is cleaned. After this date has passed and the skull has been officially measured, I advise people to coat the skull and the teeth with Mod Podge. It is a craft product that is white, but dries clear. It is available at most craft stores like Michaels, etc. Just paint it on with a small artist's brush. Allow to dry. Give it a couple of coats, making sure to allow it to dry completely between coats. This will help keep the skull and teeth from drying out, cracking and becoming loose.



# Staff Appointment



Tasha Desjardins

It gives me great pleasure to announce that, effective Monday, November 9, 2020, Tasha Desjardins has accepted the position of Administrative Assistant in the Edmonton office.

Tasha grew up in Devon, Alberta, where she still resides with her husband, Paul, and two children, Jordan and Chantelle. Tasha worked for 13 years in administration with Alberta Environment and Parks, in both the Forestry and Water Departments, as well as the Assistant Deputy Minister's office. Following some time at home while her children were young, Tasha then worked as a clerk for Canada Post.

Tasha enjoys outdoor activities such as fishing, camping, hiking, and also spending time at her cabin with her family.

Tasha can be reached through the Edmonton office and via email at [tasha@ahcia.com](mailto:tasha@ahcia.com). Please join me in welcoming Tasha to the AHEIA family!

Robert A. Gruszecki, President - AHEIA

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26



“... the satisfaction of watching a disc turn to dust does a body good  
and sure helps to keep a positive mental attitude!”

# Women's and Youth Shotgun Leagues 2020

By Allan Orr



Allan Orr  
Assistant Conservation  
Education Coordinator  
AHEIA Red Deer - South

Despite this year's unusual circumstances, we were able to hold our two shotgun leagues this year. Unfortunately, we missed the spring session due to the COVID shutdown, but the summer and fall sessions went ahead with the required protocols in place. The weather for both sessions was amazing, even into October for our wind-up, held on October 3.

Not surprisingly our numbers were up this year. I think everyone was just happy to have an opportunity to get out of the house and do some safe socializing, and at the same time, blow off some steam by destroying some clay targets. I can tell you that the satisfaction of watching a disc turn to dust does a body good and sure helps to keep a positive mental attitude!

As in the past, we had two or three brand new shooters each week and in speaking with our expert beginner instructors, everyone who came out broke at least one clay! Those of us who were coaching elsewhere could tell when a beginner hit their first target by the raucous cheer that would erupt from the newbie's new shooting friends when that first target was broken. Each shooter who gets their "First Clay" broken is rewarded with a lapel pin to celebrate the accomplishment. I am sure these pins are forever-treasured mementos of a significant moment of triumph in these ladies and kids lives! Ok, that may be an over-exaggeration, but they are pretty excited to receive one.

For anyone interested, here is how the leagues work: Leagues start on the first Wednesday in May (May 5, 2021) and run for six consecutive weeks. We then take a short break and begin the summer session on the first Wednesday in July (July 7, 2021), followed by another short break to give our volunteer coaches a bit of a break. The fall session starts on, you guessed it, the first Wednesday in September (September 1, 2021) and runs each Wednesday in September. We also hold a wrap-up the first Saturday

following the end of the fall session, which will be October 2 in 2021. Shooting starts at 6:00pm for the spring and summer sessions, and at 4:30pm for the fall session. Shooting usually goes until around 7:30 or 8:00pm, but shooters can stay as long as they like, or until the Calgary Firearms Centre closes for the night. If you cannot get there by 6:00pm, no problem; get there when you can and leave when you want.

There are all levels of shooters at the leagues, from raw beginners to some of the old (oops, I mean experienced) shooters who have been with us for the four years that we have run the program. We are building a wonderful community of women and youth shooters and are looking to expand that community each year.

If you do not have a shotgun, no problem, we will supply you with one at no charge. If you need coaching, no problem, we will supply an AHEIA certified coach for you at no charge. We ask that you bring your own eye and ear protection, but if you do not have any, that's right, we will supply some to you at no charge.

Participants in the Women's League are required to purchase an AHEIA membership (currently \$45.00 per calendar year), your ammunition (approximately \$9.00ish per box of 25 shells), and a league fee which remains at \$60 per session (\$50 for the fall). Youth must purchase or supply only their own ammunition.

If you have ever thought about learning to shoot with a great bunch of coaches and some fun ladies, consider coming out to the Calgary Firearms Centre located near DeWinton for our 2021 Women and Youth Shotgun Leagues starting on May 5, 2021.

For more information contact me at  
[allan@aheia.com](mailto:allan@aheia.com)



CALGARY FIREARMS CENTRE

# WOMEN'S SHOTGUN LEAGUES

**ALL ABILITIES WELCOME  
INCLUDING THOSE WHO HAVE NEVER  
HELD A GUN BEFORE!**



**SPRING 2021 SESSION**

May 5, 12, 19, 26, June 2, 9

**SUMMER 2021 SESSION**

July 7, 14, 21, 28, August 4, 11

**FALL 2021 SESSION**

September 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

Cost is \$60.00 per session  
(\$50.00 for Fall session)

Firearms rentals included.

**Please bring eye and ear protection.**

AHEIA membership is required and, if necessary, can be purchased onsite, online, or at an AHEIA office. No firearms licence required.

Coaching provided by certified shotgun instructors. Targets and ammunition will be sold at member pricing.

**Shooting starts at 6:00pm for the Spring and Summer Sessions, 4:30pm for the Fall Session.**

Sessions held at the

**CALGARY FIREARMS CENTRE**

242 Avenue and 32 Street SW, DeWinton, AB

[www.AHEIA.com/calgaryfirearmscentre](http://www.AHEIA.com/calgaryfirearmscentre)

To register or for more information  
contact the Calgary Firearms Centre at

**403.256.0665**

EMAIL [INFO@AHEIA.COM](mailto:INFO@AHEIA.COM)





# AHEIA FUNDRAISING RAFFLES

CALL or EMAIL OUR OFFICES TO PURCHASE TICKETS!

You are not required to be present to be eligible to win. Tickets cannot be sold to persons under 18 years of age.

## 3 GUN RAFFLE

Tickets  
\$2  
each



1st Prize

Retail Value:  
\$2400.00

**Browning Cynergy CX  
Composite 12ga Over/Under Shotgun**

Ajustable comb and trigger. Includes Midas choke tubes.



2nd Prize

Retail Value:  
\$980.00

**Winchester XPR Rifle/Scope Combo**

.270 calibre, bolt action, composite matte black stock, comes with Vortex Crossfire II 3-9x40mm scope.



3rd Prize

Retail Value:  
\$690.00

**Condor Competition  
12ga Over/Under Shotgun**

Adjustable comb, ported barrel, includes 8 chokes.

**Draw Date: Wednesday, March 17, 2021  
Calgary Conservation Education Centre for Excellence**

License #566431 • 10,000 Tickets Printed

## SPECIALTY SHOTGUN RAFFLE

Tickets  
\$5  
each



Retail Value:  
\$3675.00

**Beretta 690 Field I Over/Under  
12ga Shotgun**

Steelium barrels, 3" chamber, floral engraving, recoil pad, single selective trigger.

**Draw Date: Sunday, August 22, 2021  
Calgary Firearms Centre**

License #566493 • 3500 Tickets Printed



## VARMINT/TARGET RIFLE RAFFLE



1st Prize

Retail Value:  
\$1568.70

**Tikka T3X Varmint/Target Bolt Action Rifle**

.223 calibre, stainless free floating heavy contour barrel.



2nd Prize

Retail Value:  
\$1332.45

**Browning T Bolt Varmint Bolt Action Rifle**

.22 L.R., grey laminate stock, Monte Carlo.

**Draw Date: Friday, May 14, 2021  
Calgary Conservation Education Centre for Excellence**

License #566434 • 7000 Tickets Printed

## UPLAND/WATERFOWLER/ SPORTING FIREARM RAFFLE



Retail Value:  
\$3100.00

**Benelli Ethos Engraved  
Nickle-Plated Semi-Automatic 12ga Shotgun**

3" chamber, features 5 Crio choke tubes.



Retail Value:  
\$1500.00

**Winchester SX4  
Semi-Automatic 12 ga Shotgun**

Cerokote FDE, camo stock, features 3 inv. chock tubes.

*One lucky winner will receive both firearms!*

Total Retail Value: \$4600.00

**Draw Date: Friday, September 3, 2021  
Calgary Conservation Education Centre for Excellence**

License #566437 • 1000 Tickets Printed

Calgary Conservation Education Centre for Excellence  
911 Sylvester Crescent SW, Calgary, Alberta T2W 0R8

**403.252.8474 • 1.866.852.4342**

**info@aheia.com**

Edmonton Conservation Education Centre for Excellence  
#88, 4003 - 98 Street, Edmonton, Alberta T6E 6M8

**780.466.6682 • 1.866.282.4342**

**edmontoninfo@aheia.com**

ANOTHER IN OUR SERIES OF OUTDOOR EDUCATION COURSES

# ALBERTA FISHING EDUCATION PROGRAM

This program offers a comprehensive educational experience.  
Divided into eight modules plus a final exam, the course may be taken  
online or in a classroom format taught by AHEIA certified instructors.

Course modules include:

**ALBERTA FISHING REGULATIONS AND MANAGEMENT  
IDENTIFICATION OF ALBERTA GAME FISH  
FISHING EQUIPMENT • FISHING TECHNIQUES  
PREPARING AND COOKING YOUR CATCH  
SAFETY WHILE FISHING  
ETHICAL BEHAVIOUR  
LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES**



**CONTACT US TODAY  
FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

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**1-866-852-4342**

AHEIA Edmonton

**1-866-282-4342**

**www.aheia.com**





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