

KANSAS

Wildlife & Parks

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2014

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The Photo Issue
Eternalizing a Moment in Time

KANSAS View

by Robin Jennison



IMPROVING OUR SELF-ESTEEM

Sometimes when I hear fellow Kansans describe our state, it reminds me of a cartoon depicting how differently men and women view themselves. The left-side of the cartoon shows a heavy-set, out-of-shape man in a too-small bathing suite smiling and admiring himself in the mirror. The mirror image the man sees is that of a muscular body-builder. On the right-side of the cartoon, a fit and trim woman in a bikini frowns and frets over her image in the mirror, which to her looks heavy and out of shape. I'm afraid many Kansans see our state the way the woman in the cartoon sees herself – much less beautiful than it is in reality.

However, when I talk to non-residents who have traveled the state, they are almost always surprised at how beautiful Kansas is. Our negative self-image is also evident in the fact that Kansas is 47th among states in the amount of money we spend promoting tourism. It's as if we don't really believe we have anything to offer people from other states. I believe we do and the thousands who visit Kansas each year think we do, as well.

I've stood before the Rocky Mountains and felt insignificant and awed. I've felt the same way watching a fiery sunset in

western Kansas. There may be no better place to revel in the beauty and joy of sunrises and sunsets than Kansas.

I've gazed at mule deer pronging across the shortgrass prairie, grateful we can still see muleys and relieved there is still large expanses of native shortgrass prairie in Kansas. I've felt a sense of pride seeing how Kansas farmers and ranchers feed our nation with our fertile lands. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder, and I see beauty in well-managed farmland.

There are spectacular landscapes to be sure. Castle Rock, in Gove County, is amazing, as are the Arikaree Breaks in Cheyenne County. The Red Hills of southern Kansas provide stunning vistas and are renowned for deer, turkey and quail hunting. The rolling Smoky Hills in north-central Kansas can remind us of what the prairies looked like 150 years ago and still harbor deer, greater prairie chickens, quail and a host of other native wildlife. The glaciated region of the northeast is marked with hardwood timber, fertile farm fields and large manmade reservoirs teeming with walleye, crappie, catfish and white bass. In the southeast, there are rugged Ozarkian hills covered with hard-

woods and cut by clear-running creeks. Then there are the world-renowned wetlands in central Kansas, teeming with millions of migratory birds each spring and fall.

In each corner, north to south, and points in between, Kansas has dozens of head-turning vistas. And when you combine the land with the people and wildlife resources, you understand why people travel hundreds or thousands of miles each fall to visit. I've seen native Kansans shake their heads and remark, "I can't believe those guys drove 500 miles just to hunt pheasants." Well the truth is, they came for more than just pheasants, and they'll come back year after year because they see Kansas differently than many of its residents do.

To borrow a phrase from a goofy show on one of the sports channels, "C'mon, man." It's time we recognized the diverse and outstanding land and natural resources we take for granted or overlook. If Kansans improve the image they have of our state, it will rub off on those who've never visited. We don't have to worry about those who've already spent time here – they'll be back. 

2014 Photo Issue

A photo is a very powerful thing, holding the ability to simultaneously stop time in its tracks and bring us back to a place in time that is already gone.

Photos eternalize moments that will never be repeated. For this very reason, as I looked through photos to share in this issue, I knew I wanted to find images that captured the climax of the story just before the fall, photos that put us in the eye of the storm, in the midst of the “action.”

So as you flip through the pages of this issue, savor each image, drench yourself in the colors and textures and shapes, and most importantly, enjoy this very moment in time, for it will never reveal itself to you the same way it did just now.

— Nadia Marji



Front Cover: As "Gator" waded through Cheyenne Bottoms to retrieve this blue-winged teal, owner Marc Murrell grabbed his camera and snapped this photo. **Back Cover:** A lone ice-covered tree, branches glistening in the sun, stands amid a frozen field, making a picture-perfect scene in this Marc Murrell photo.



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Editorial Creed: To promote the conservation and wise use of our natural resources, to instill an understanding of our responsibilities to the land.

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PRAIRIE RATTLESNAKE
BOB GRESS



[CLOCKWISE FROM TOP
LEFT]

**LESSER PRAIRIE
CHICKENS
BOB GRESS**

**BURROWING OWLS
DAVID SEIBEL**

**ORNATE BOX
TURTLE
BOB GRESS**

**BOBCATS
BOB GRESS**





RED FOX
BOB GRESS





BALD EAGLE
DANNY BROWN





GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL, DAVID SEIBEL [TOP LEFT]
WILSON'S PHALAROPES, DAVID SEIBEL [BOTTOM LEFT]
SABINE'S GULL, DAVID SEIBEL [RIGHT]

WILSON'S PHALAROPES
JUDD PATTERSON





WOODHOUSE'S TOAD, BOB GRESS [TOP]
RIVER OTTER, DANNY BROWN [BOTTOM]



SNOWY EGRET
JIM GLYNN

.....

**"NO MAN EVER
STEPS IN THE
SAME RIVER
TWICE, FOR IT IS
NOT THE SAME
RIVER AND HE IS
NOT THE SAME
MAN."**

[HERACLITUS]





EASTERN SCREECH OWL
DAVID SEIBEL







KILLDEER
DANNY BROWN

TALLGRASS PRAIRIE
JUDD PATTERSON





COYOTE
MATT MILES

SHORT-EARED OWL
JUDD PATTERSON





WHITETAIL DEER
MATT MILES



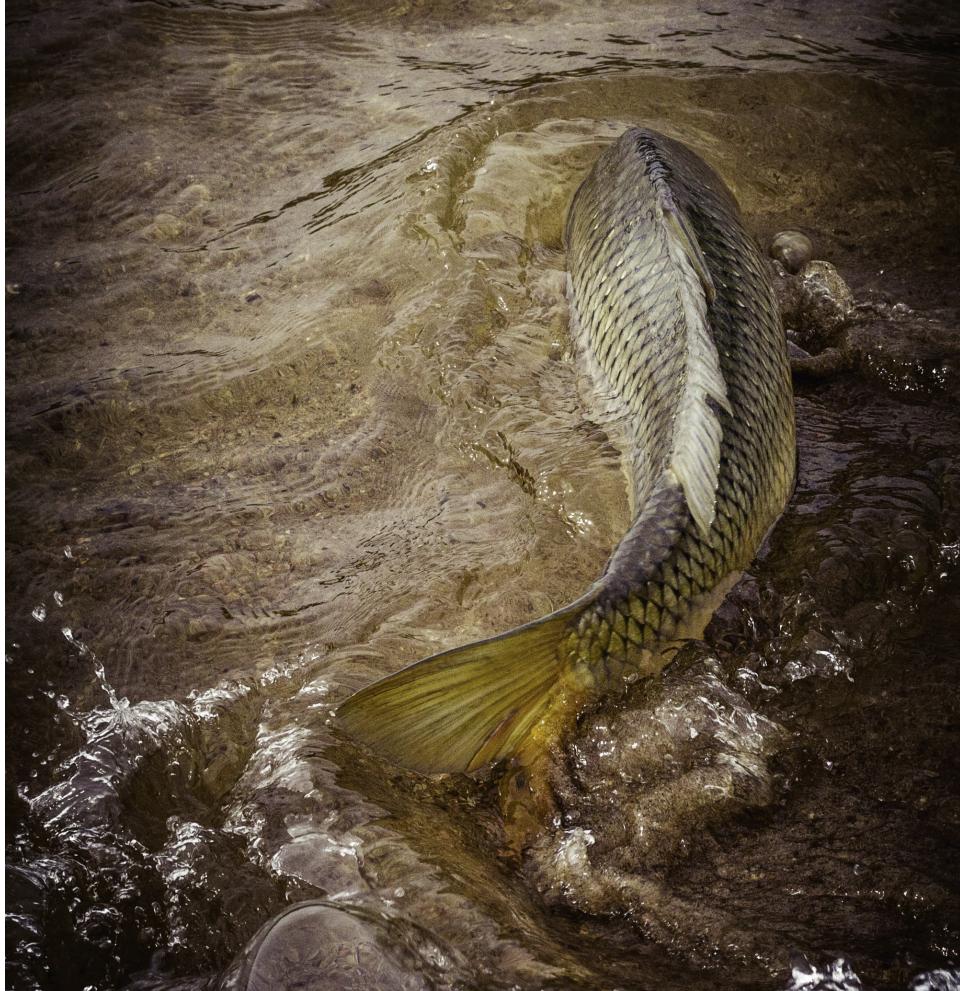
COMMON CARP
JESSICA MOUNTS
[TOP]

CARP WRANGLERS
NADIA MARJI
[BOTTOM]

ICE ANGLER
MARC MURRELL
[RIGHT]

“DON’T TELL FISH
STORIES WHERE
THE PEOPLE KNOW
YOU; BUT PARTICULARLY,
DON’T TELL
THEM WHERE THEY
KNOW THE FISH.”

[MARK TWAIN]







BEETLE
DAVID SEIBEL



TREE SWALLOW
DAVID SEIBEL



PRAIRIE POOL
JUDD PATTERSON



WOOD DUCK
JIM GLYNN



BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON
DANNY BROWN





BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER, DAVID SEIBEL [TOP LEFT]

RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD, JUDD PATTERSON [BOTTOM LEFT]

BEE, MATT MILES [RIGHT]

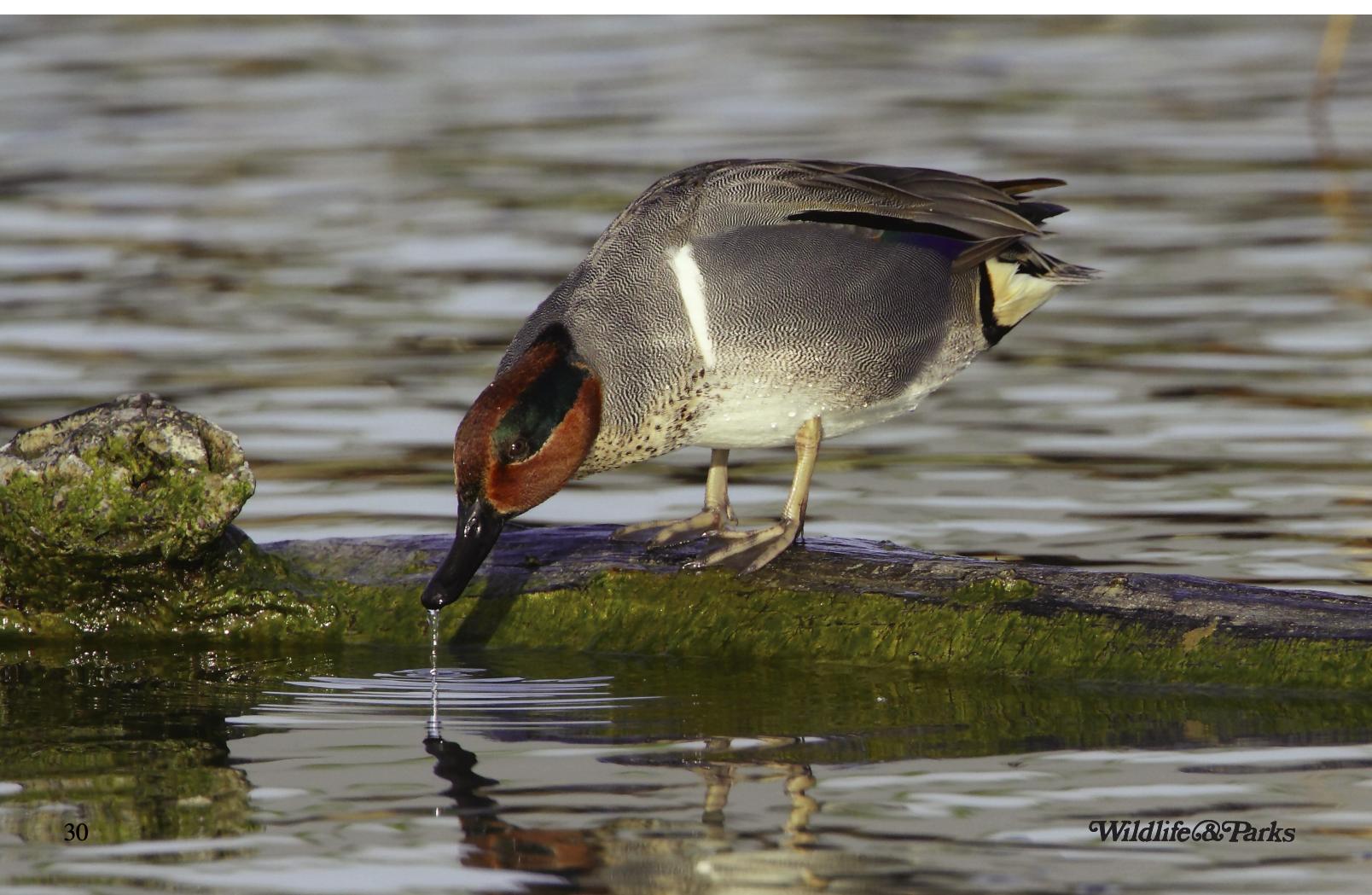


"PEARL'S BIRD"
NADIA MARJI
[LEFT]

WATER BREAK
MARC MURRELL
[RIGHT]







BLUE-WINGED TEAL

MIKE MILLER

[TOP LEFT]

GREEN-WINGED TEAL

BOB GRESS

[BOTTOM LEFT]

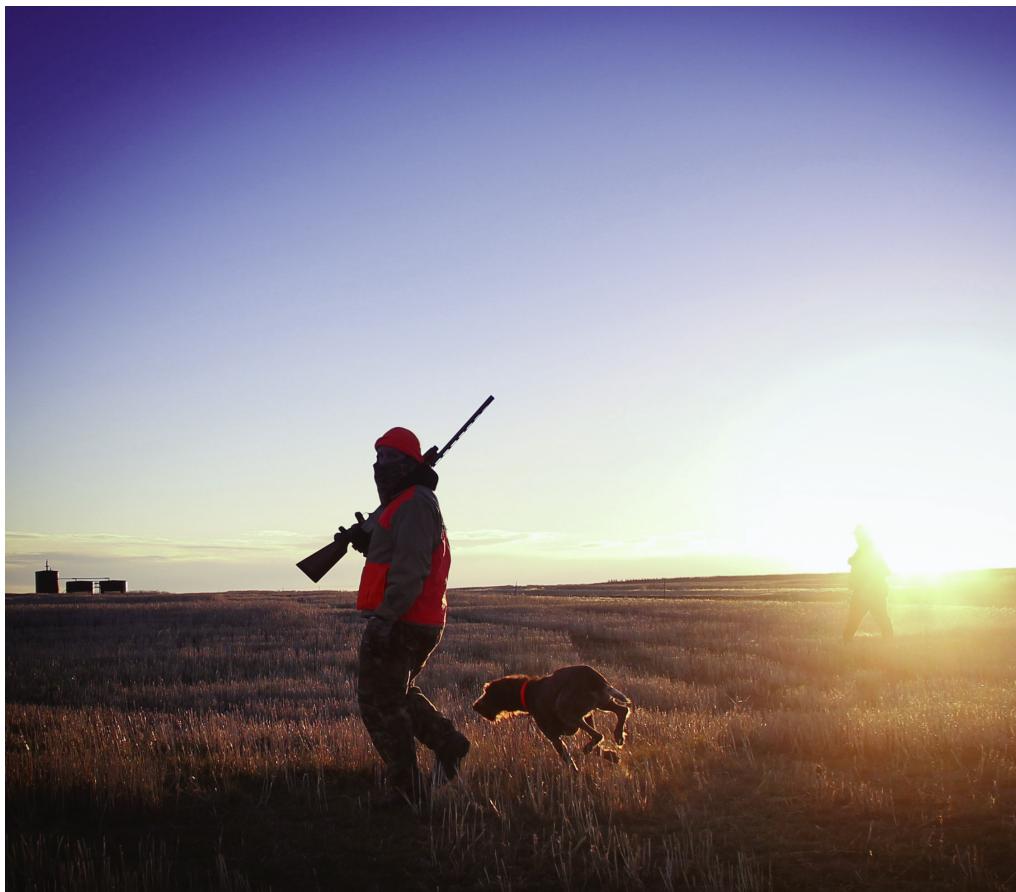
NORTHERN SHOVELER

NADIA MARJI

[RIGHT]







**WHITETAIL DEER
MATT MILES
[LEFT]**

**CONTROLLED BURN
JESSICA MOUNTS
[TOP RIGHT]**

**ISAAC AND “GUS”
JESSICA MOUNTS
[BOTTOM RIGHT]**

.....

**“THE POETRY OF
THE EARTH IS
NEVER DEAD.”**

[JOHN KEATS]





SANDHILL CRANES
BOB GRESS

TRUMPETER SWANS
DANNY BROWN

.....

**"BIRDS ARE A
MIRACLE
BECAUSE THEY
PROVE TO US
THERE IS
A FINER,
SIMPLER
STATE OF BEING
WHICH WE MAY
STRIVE
TO ATTAIN."**

[DOUGLAS COUPLAND]





FATHER-DAUGHTER "AIR TIME"
MATT MILES





SEMIPALMATED SANDPIPER
BOB GRESS



WILD ABOUT KANSAS

JUNIOR PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST

THE FOLLOWING THREE PAGES FEATURE WINNING ENTRIES FROM KANSAS *WILDLIFE & PARKS* MAGAZINE'S FIRST ANNUAL WILD ABOUT KANSAS JUNIOR PHOTO CONTEST HELD EARLIER THIS YEAR. PHOTOS WERE JUDGED BASED ON CREATIVITY, COMPOSITION, SUBJECT MATTER, LIGHTING, AND THE OVERALL SHARPNESS OF THE PHOTO.

A TOTAL OF 77 ENTRIES WERE RECEIVED FROM 32 PARTICIPANTS, RANGING FROM AGE 11-18. 2013 CONTEST AWARD WINNERS ARE LISTED BELOW:

Landscape

1ST PLACE - MARK KREIDER (18), NORTH NEWTON: "LIGHTNING AND EVENING STORM"

2ND PLACE - MARK KREIDER (18), NORTH NEWTON: "WINTER MORNING ON SAND CREEK"

3RD PLACE - ANNA FAUST (16), LAWRENCE: "A MOMENT IN TIME"

HONORABLE MENTION - LEXI BRADY (17), LAWRENCE: "COLORS OF THE LAKE"

Wildlife

1ST PLACE - ALLIE IFLAND (12), CEDAR: "COLLARED LIZARD"

2ND PLACE - CHRISTINA CRAIG (15), LAWRENCE: "THE BOSS"

3RD PLACE - ROSS IFLAND (14), CEDAR: "WALKING ON WATER"

HONORABLE MENTION - ADDIE BRUNS (18), SPRING HILL: "KANSAS FAWN"

OUTDOOR RECREATION

1ST PLACE - ALLIE IFLAND (12), CEDAR: "DUCK HUNT"

2ND PLACE - JESSICA LAHASKY (18), OVERLAND PARK: "PATIENCE"

3RD PLACE - HEATHER WOESLAGEL (13), HUTCHINSON: "STATE FAIR SHOOTING"

HONORABLE MENTION - JESSICA LAHASKY (18), OVERLAND PARK: "GONE FISHIN'"

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE YOUR PHOTO FEATURED IN THE 2015 JANUARY/FEBRUARY PHOTO ISSUE OF KANSAS *WILDLIFE & PARKS* MAGAZINE, VISIT KSOUTDOORS.COM THIS JANUARY FOR INFORMATION ON CONTEST RULES AND ELIGIBILITY, AND SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS.



MARK KREIDER [ABOVE AND BELOW]



ANNA FAUST



LEXI BRADY



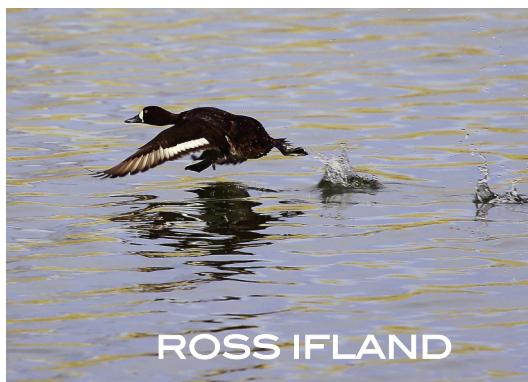
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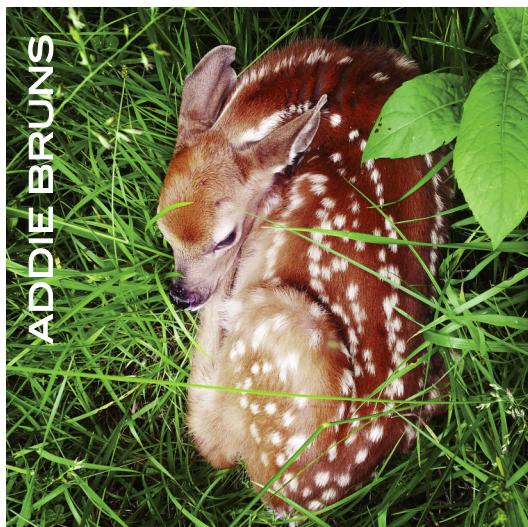
ALLIE IFLAND



CHRISTINA CRAIG



ROSS IFLAND



ADDIE BRUNS



**“MAY YOUR TRAILS
BE CROOKED,
WINDING,
LONESOME,
DANGEROUS,
LEADING TO THE
MOST AMAZING
VIEW.”**

[EDWARD ABBEY]

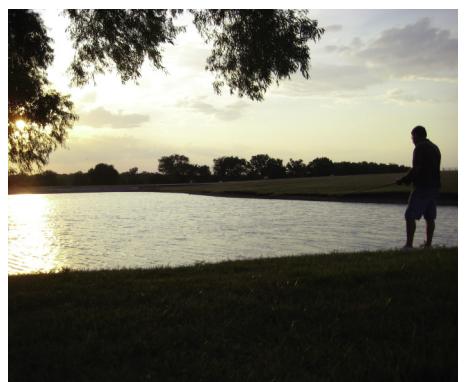
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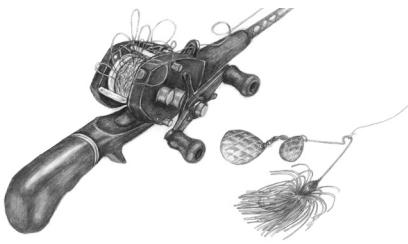
ALLIE IFLAND
[TOP LEFT]

JESSICA LAHASKY
[BOTTOM LEFT]

**HEATHER
WOESLAGEL**
[TOP RIGHT]

JESSICA LAHASKY
[BOTTOM RIGHT]





Backlash

by Mike Miller

IT COULDN'T HAPPEN TO ME

It's human nature to make assumptions when we hear someone has had an accident and is injured. We assume they were in the wrong place at the wrong time, they were being careless, or maybe they were doing something stupid. That kind of thinking lets us continue to do things considered risky – "That couldn't happen to me because I'm smarter, more aware or more careful."

And to be honest, the older I get, the more careful I am. At 55, I understand I'm not invincible. When I was 25, I never considered I would get injured doing something I enjoyed. I was agile and athletic – and blissfully ignorant. While I was never a huge risk taker, I never thought about getting injured and sometimes didn't take simple precautions. I climbed trees, hunted from home-made treestands, and rarely wore a safety belt. Heck, when I started bowhunting, no one wore them. I never fell and don't remember even coming close. I made it through my youth without a broken bone or injury. I took credit for that, but there was probably a lot of luck involved.

Now that my invincibility has worn off, I consider the consequences of everything I do. I spend my bow season in a ladder stand, and I haven't hunted without a safety belt in more than 20 years. But on Nov. 23, 2013, I became a statistic of "hunting-related accidents."

What I thought could never happen, happened. On a cold, breezy morning, I spent a couple of hours in my ladder stand. The rut was on and I enjoyed watching deer all morning. I snapped photos, shivered off the cold and enjoyed the morning like I have done hundreds

of times. However, at a little after nine, the north wind I was facing convinced me it was time to quit. I stowed binoculars, rattling antlers and camera and strapped on my daypack and fanny pack just before unhooking the safety harness. I wear a full-body harness with a D-ring that I connect to a belt secured around the tree. I was standing on the top of the ladder platform, 15 feet from the ground, getting ready for an easy climb down, when I realized I hadn't lowered by bow. I didn't want to climb with it in my hand, so I fished the string from my pocket, snapped the clip to the top pulley and began lowering the bow. I remember watching the bow as it neared the ground and leaning out to swing it away from the bottom rungs of the ladder.

Next thing I remember is the ground coming at me – fast. There was not an "oh, no" moment when I felt I was losing my balance. One second I was busy lowering my bow and the next, I was on the ground.

I landed on my forearms and knees, hitting a log with my left arm. There was 2 inches of snow and the ground there is sandy, which probably kept my injuries minimal. I stood and took a quick inventory: my left arm and both knees hurt. I walked around in a couple of big circles, bewildered but grateful that I didn't appear seriously injured. I was concerned my left arm was broken. "How will I live this down," I thought to myself. I've written about being safe while hunting and taught hunter education for more than 25 years.

In denial, I half-convinced myself that a broken bone would hurt more than mine did. I picked up all my

stuff, even carrying my bow in my left hand while I walked the quarter-mile to the truck. I was dreading the attention a trip to the emergency room and wearing a cast for the next six weeks would bring.

However, as I drove home, I could feel something was different in my arm. I finally called my wife to warn her and ask her if she could take me to the emergency room. To make a long story short, the ulna was broke. Rather than set it, cast it and send me home, I was getting prepped for surgery at noon. The orthopedic surgeon felt a plate was necessary. I was home by six that night.

I wore a large fiberglass splint for 10 days, reminding me every minute of every day of my blunder. Since the staples were removed, I've worn a one-piece fiberglass splint that isn't as uncomfortable but is still a reminder. However, I never felt too sorry for myself. Others have incurred much more serious injuries in similar falls. I was lucky. As I write this, only four weeks after the fall, I'm nearly healed. The fall is a distant memory, and could be nearly forgotten, except for the fact that almost daily I have to explain to a friend how and why it happened.

I thought I was being careful, but obviously not careful enough. My only explanation for the fall, other than I removed the safety strap too early, was that my foot was hanging over the edge of the platform. I was wearing large, insulated boots and couldn't feel the platform with my feet. With the ball of my right foot hanging over, when I leaned forward to swing the bow out, there was no leverage to keep my balance. All I know is that it happened to me, and it can happen to you. ☺

