

Illinois Outdoor News

2026 EDITORIAL CALENDAR

These stories and topics will be included on the pages of Outdoor News in 2026, so pick the issue that will highlight your product the best!

• Specific articles ❖ Sport Shows (bonus circulation)

Note: Ad deadline is the right-hand column.

JANUARY

Issue Date		Ad Deadline
Jan. 9 (Issue 1)	Outdoor Planning for 2026 • Heading west? How to corner cross legally • Rifled barrel shotgun options • Deep-freeze tactics: Midwinter 'eyes on structure and flats ❖ <i>Chicagoland Fishing Expo — Schaumburg, IL (1/22-1/25)</i>	Dec. 23
Jan. 23 (Issue 2)	Looking to Spring • Buyer's Guide: Roundup of new boat motors and trolling motors • The Outdoor Steward: Plan now for 2026 buckthorn battles • Buyer's Guide: A look at new fishing watercraft for 2026	Jan. 9

FEBRUARY

Feb. 6 (Issue 3)	Late-Winter Special • Review 2025-26 Illinois Deer Harvest • Bass'n plan: Tips for bass fishing in Florida • Purchasing your first forward-facing sonar unit	Jan. 23
Feb. 20 (Issue 4)	Habitat Planning Special • Do I need a red dot on my turkey shotgun? • Bass'n Plan: 2026 national bass fishing tournament preview • Outdoor Steward: Spring site work for autumn ground ambushes	Feb. 6

MARCH

Mar. 6 (Issue 5)	Season of Transition • New hunting products from 2026 SHOT and ATA shows • 10 top lifetime hunting gear investments ❖ <i>Illinois Deer Classic & Fishing Expo — Peoria, IL (3/20-3/22)</i>	Feb. 20
Mar. 20 (Issue 6)	Open Water Fishing • Buyer's Guide: Sorting out the latest and greatest rods and reels • Outdoor Steward: Restoring private wetlands for fish and fowl	Mar. 6

APRIL

Issue Date		Ad Deadline
Apr. 3 (Issue 7)	Spring Turkey Hunting • Illinois Spring Turkey Season Preview • Are turkeys onto decoys? Options for life-like turkey decoys	Mar. 20
Apr. 17 (Issue 8)	Bass Fishing in Illinois • Flashback to State Record Largemouth • Buyer's Guide: What's new in lures (including muskie lures!) for 2026 • Bass'n Plan: Five reasons you're not catching big bass	Apr. 3

MAY

May 1 (Issue 9)	Fishing Technology • Where does Illinois Stand on New Sonar Options? • Backtrolling in the electronics era... still relevant! • Getting serious with fillet knife sharpening and maintenance	Apr. 17
May 15 (Issue 10)	Lake Michigan Special • Illinois Invasive Carp Update • Bass'n Plan: Top Great Lakes bass sanctuaries	May 1
May 29 (Issue 11)	Father's Day Gift Guide • Ron Spomer: Accurate rifles under \$1,000 • 4x4 SUVs and Trucks: Top mid-size truck options • GPS'n: Handheld units and smartwatches	May 15

JUNE

June 12 (Issue 12)	Summer Outdoors Guide • DNR's Summer 2026 Fish Stocking Plan • Bass'n Plan: Fishing those tricky, multi-species jerkbaits • Explaining different rifle actions	May 29
June 26 (Issue 13)	Dog Training Special • Trail cameras + mock scrapes = deer intel gold • Breed profile: 5 hunting breeds that are great in the house • Longetivity afield: Options to improve your vision	June 12

Issue Date **JULY** Ad Deadline

July 10 Shooting Special **June 26**
(Issue 14) • Preview of the 2026 Grand American
• The resurgence of lever-action rifles
• Rifle cartridges: ubiquitous .223s

July 24 Late Summer Planning **July 10**
(Issue 15) • Optics: Why would I buy a monocular?
• What about mutts? Mixed-breed dogs afield
• Reports from ICAST 2026

AUGUST

Aug. 7 Archery Season Guide **July 24**
(Issue 16) • The latest and greatest in compounds for 2026
• Expandable broadhead styles and options
• A beginner's guide to building great arrows

Aug. 21 Hunting Season Prep **Aug 7**
(Issue 17) • News Buyer's Guide: 2026 review of new crossbows
• How to choose an archery release
• Silencer or suppressor? What's the difference?

SEPTEMBER

Sept. 4 Waterfowler's Outlook **Aug. 21**
(Issue 18) • Preview of the 2026 Illinois Duck Season
• Waterfowler's wishlist: New gear changing the game
• Buyer's Guide: Profiling the latest in the faithful quad marketplace

Sept. 18 Fall Fishing **Sept. 3**
(Issue 19) • On the rivers: Top Illinois walleye spots
• Shotgunning mojo wings and choke tubes: How far is too far?
• Where do big bucks go when they disappear?

Issue Date **OCTOBER** Ad Deadline

Oct. 2 Prime Time in Illinois Outdoors **Sept. 18**
(Issue 20) • Status of the black crappie in Illinois lakes
• Bust a' move... and a flock. Fall turkey-hunting tactics
• Decoying: Just how well can ducks see?

Oct. 16 Wild Game Cooking **Oct. 2**
(Issue 21) • 5 top coolers for moving big game... and other cold stuff
• Freezer audit: Cook through what you forgot you had
• Four myths about shotguns and shotgunning

Oct. 30 Ready for Winter? **Oct. 16**
(Issue 22) • Projects: Got a hankering to build a wooden canoe?
• Heated wall tent setups for backcountry ice fishing

NOVEMBER

Nov. 13 Firearms Deer Season Prep **Oct. 30**
(Issue 23) • A glance at the past 50 years of Illinois gun harvests
• Tag Soup or Tag Soup-er?: Bouncing back from missed shots
• Top modern ammo innovations for big-game hunters

Nov. 27 Hard Water Options **Nov. 13**
(Issue 24) • Top 10 Illinois ice fishing lakes
• Buyer's Guide: New augers, heaters, shelters and sleds
• Buyer's Guide: New ice tackle, rods, reels, tip-ups, and lures

DECEMBER

Dec. 11 Holiday Gift Guide **Nov. 27**
(Issue 25) • Outdoors lit: A classic winter campfire tale
• Great holiday gift ideas, plus the annual book review
• How to fly with outdoor gear in 2027

Dec. 25 Mid-winter Opportunities **Dec. 11**
(Issue 26) • Urban edge: The rise of suburban traplines for nuisance control
• The Outdoor Steward: Install a 55-gallon drum wildlife watering hole
• Texas exotics: A winter cure for cabin fever



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**Outdoor News, Inc., P.O. Box 47012, Plymouth, MN 55447-0012
(262) 385-0839**

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