

## It's Summertime....

...and Ontario Women Anglers has been busy hosting some great events.

### Southwestern Ontario

**Saturday, June 11 Fanshawe Conservation Area**

Ontario Women Anglers held it's first event in southwestern Ontario. It was a fun day of kayak and shore fishing followed by a wonderful potluck barbeque. Many thanks to the organizing committee of Cat Bodden, Tricia Wallace, Sarah Jinkerson and Alicia Raytrowsky for the wonderful day! Look out for more southwestern events in 2023!



### Inside this issue

- OWA Summer Events .....1
- Kayak Fishing .....5
- Bass Behaviour.....7
- Five Baits for Bass.....9
- Junior Corner.....11

### Newsletter Contributors

- Amanda Tracey
- Yvonne Brown
- Chris McCoy
- Catherine Bodden

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our newsletter creator, Amanda Tracey, for producing our OWA and OWA Jr Club newsletters for the past 2+ years. Amanda is moving on to a new volunteer position with the Kingston Junior Naturalists program, an organization that she has been involved with for the past 10 years. We wish you the best of luck in your new post! *Yvonne Brown*



# Kayak Angling Social

Saturday, July 23 Island Lake Conservation Area

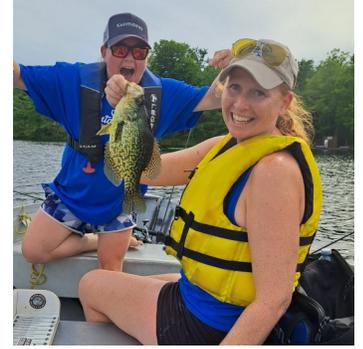
Many thanks to Chris McCoy and Ava Wickens for hosting our first kayak angling day. Great fun and great fishing was had as OWA members took to the water at Island Lake in Orangeville. We are working on one or two more kayak events for summer 2023!



# Bass Fishing Weekend for Women at Elbow Lake

July 29 — August 1 Elbow Lake Environmental Education Centre

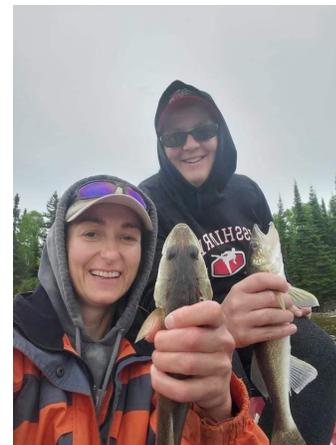
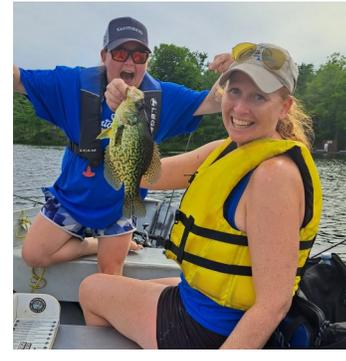
It wouldn't be summer without our annual visit to ELEC. Ontario Women Anglers has held events at this facility for eight years now and each one brings it's own magic to the weekend. Our traditional fun bass tournament was a blast and a number of Master Angler fish were caught at the event. Jim McLaughlin and Dave Chong dropped in for a visit and to chat to us about using electronics on the water, the Tokyo Rig and shared so much of their fishing knowledge. See all you ladies again in 2023!



# OWA Northwestern Ontario

June 11 — 13 Sunset on the Chain

In partnership with the Dryden District Conservation Club (DDCC) and the OFAH WOW Dryden program, Ontario Women Anglers held it's first ever northwestern event on the famous Indian Chain of Lakes. Many thanks to Loretta Bilous and Michele Vardy for organizing the event and to all the DDCC volunteers who helped as boaters and cooks. We look forward to holding more events in the north in future.



# Kayak Fishing Tips

By Chris McCoy

Kayak fishing is a method which allows the angler the opportunity to access fishable water that no other watercraft can access. With less than a foot clearance on some kayaks, you can easily glide over stumps and logs where boats can not even think of venturing.

There are some things to consider when fishing from a kayak. First, of course, is safety as safely stowing your communication device in a water proof case both of which were covered in previous articles. So, let's get down to the best part...FISHING!

In order to avoid any tears while on the water, be sure to anchor all your most valuable items to your kayak itself. This includes rods, paddle, anchor, tackle, safety kit and your net. I simply use lengths of paracord with anchor clips attached. Make sure to place your net in a convenient place where you can grab it with your non-rod hand for landing a fish. Clip these items onto any anchor points your kayak has. I have added D-ring clips to my kayak after market so I have at least six anchor points per side on my kayak. Rod mounting kits are available online and can be added for extra rod and net storage after market. Be sure to check your warranty so it is not voided by drilling into your kayak.



When you are on flat water, start by paddling into the wind and leave your trip back to the starting point to nature using the wind to help you drift back to your entry point. This will save a lot of exhaustion at the end of the day when you are ready to hit dry land again.

Craft yourself an anchor from a five pound hand weight (the type coated in plastic is the best) and a 30 foot length of 50 lb paracord. Anchor this to your kayak and remember to lower it slowly into the water to avoid any sudden jolting as the anchor drops to the bottom. An anchor, in even low winds, will make your day much more successful as you tend to drift more quickly off a great fishing spot without one.

Casting in a kayak can be a bit tricky. You must counter your casting weight to avoid tipping. Sit-on-top kayaks tend to have more risk of tipping on a cast due to your centre of gravity being higher. Sit in kayaks are often more stable but can still tip if you get over zealous and try to set a record length cast. Start with short casts first. Remember, you can get really close to your targeted water because of your stealthy kayak so you don't need to cast really far.

Now is not the time to start out with a new rod. An old faithful rod and reel is best for your first trip out and I always try and take two rods with me. This comes in handy when you want to switch tackle or style of fishing from say a drop-shot to topwater frogs. You will be able to target different structure and depths more quickly. Plus, if you break off a line you won't have to try retying on the water and can leave that for when you are on shore. This skill comes as you gain more experience and comfort in your kayak. It's best to start with arti-

*(Continued on page 6)*

(Continued from page 5)

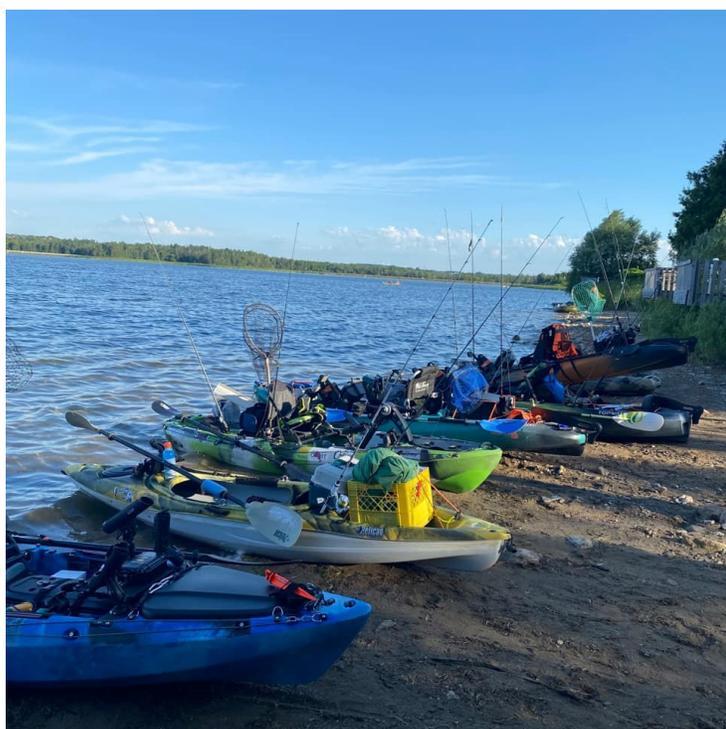
ficial bait and save the worms for when you are more comfortable fishing from your kayak. Spilled worms make for a very messy trip.

Always be mindful of your surroundings if you are not anchored while retying or changing lures. It is very easy to drift into boat paths or unsafe water while retying a line. Try and turn yourself 45 degrees into or away from wake or waves to avoid tipping.

Now cast away! Once you get a fish on your line, you will have a great time fighting it. Fish can significantly pull you around. Your kayak offers you a whole new drag experience. I have had fish completely redirect my kayak and virtually tire themselves out as they pull me around. Again, your body counterweight will come into play here. You don't want to let that fish pull you over to one side and tip you. Loosen your drag a bit and let the line pull out. Try and keep your rod facing forward at all times so that it is parallel to your kayak. This will give you the most stability.

When it's time to land your fish, grab your net with your non-rod hand and stretch your arm out to the opposite side you are landing the fish on. Remember, you can direct the fish to either side of the kayak for an easier netting.

Once you have your fish in the net, it can get dicey as this is the most common time fish are lost. Keep your hook in the fish and the fish in the water inside the net as long as possible. Lay the handle across your kayak and hold it down. With your rod in hand, open your bale arm and restore your rod to its holder or safe place. Now, using your preferred tool, remove the hook safely from the fish and place that hook out the side of your kayak where it won't be thrashed about. I suggest using a lip fish grip to start with to handle your fish. Remove the hook using this tool from the net and place your net in its holder. Now it's time for that photo.



If you are measuring your fish, the fish grip is the best way to quickly handle the fish and the bump board while grabbing your camera. Act quickly and keep your net handy if you need to slip your fish back into the water. Remember to hold your breath as you do this. Your fish can remain out of water for the same length of time you can hold your breath for. A deep-welled, coated net really helps with safely keeping fish alive while preparing for measurement or a photo. Once the photo is taken, slowly release your fish as usual to ensure it is ready to be on its way.

There are ways to tournament fish with a kayak and ways to build floating fish wells for weigh-ins. You are not limited to just recreational fishing from a kayak. As you gain more experience, you can target large species like salmon using a downrigger made specifically for kayakers. The possibilities are endless! Tight lines and safe paddling!

# Bass Habitat and Behaviour

By Amanda Tracey

## Largemouth Bass Habitat

Largemouth bass are hands down my favourite species to target. Largemouth bass prefer warmer water and are usually in shallow areas, whether it be shallow lakes or shallower bays and shorelines of bigger lakes. They can often be found around a lot of dense vegetation — think cattails and water lilies — or around other forms of protection and cover like a fallen tree, an old sunken dock, or piles of sunken logs. You can also often find them under docks or boats that are sitting in the water — they love the cover they provide!

## Smallmouth Bass Habitat

Unlike their big-mouthed counterparts, smallmouth bass prefer cooler water in slightly deeper to significantly deeper waters. You don't often find smallmouth bass where there is a lot of vegetation present and instead you can find them in areas where it is very rocky with piles of rocks



and boulders or near submerged logs, shoals, or sandy areas.

Figuring out where bass *should* be (e.g. what habitat they live in) is the first step when trying to target them. A lot of this work can be done right from home with the tap of a button. There are so many resources available online from professional anglers. However, when you're out on the water, where fish *should* be and where fish *actually are* can be very different depending on the time of year, weather at that moment, upcoming weather, noise and disturbance on the water, water temperature, etc.

Let's say you're out fishing and are met with a totally unproductive morning — fishing lots of docks, sunken in trees, and areas filled with lily pads and you're met with nothing. Not a single



bass. Try moving out to the weed edge or looking for humps, ledges, or drop offs. Sometimes fish will move to these areas to cool off. Fishing in areas where water is sun-covered? Try switching to shade. Change up the time of day — instead of fishing in the morning, try into the evening instead.

## Bass Behaviour

Fish behaviour in general, and especially for bass, is fascinating. Fish don't reason in the same way humans do and they simply react. They react based on instincts and based on previous experiences and conditioning. They have instincts related to breeding, feeding, defending their territory, etc. and then they anti that up with conditioning. Let's say they cruise past a weed bed and eat a bunch of bait fish — they're likely to return there again because they ate well there.

Depending on the time of day, season, etc. bass may behave aggressively or more passively. Fish tend to be very aggressive in the breeding season (which is why bass fishing is closed in many areas during this time) and may be less aggressive when the summer heat really hits and the water temperatures warm up. They may also behave aggressively at some points during the day and more passively during others.

Both of these species are considered top predators. Largemouth bass grow very quickly, eat a wide range of different prey and can tolerate dramatic changes in water temperature and clarity. Smallmouth bass produce a large number of offspring, have very few other species with the same habitat and start feeding on other fish when they're very small.

So, now you should have a good idea of how and why these species behave the way they do and where to find them. However, the next big question is: what do they want to eat? Cat tackles that in the next article with five bass bait recommendations!



# Five Best Baits for Bass

By Catherine Bodden

There is nothing more exciting than to feel the pull of the line, to hear the splash of the water the Largie or Smallie makes, or the loud voice of the angler hollering "Fish On"! Bass fishing is a great sport and one of the first things a new bass angler needs to focus on is what five baits works best. Keep it simple. I have fished with all of these and have experienced success without the frustration of what to choose because I have too many to choose from.

## STICK BAIT (aka SENKO)

- Most popular bass lure
- Many colours to choose from
- Works on any soft plastic rig
- Easy set up for both stick bait and wacky rig



## CURL TAIL GRUB

- 3 inches on barbed jig 1/8 — 1/4 oz
- Most popular colour for these that I have found to be successful are white, brown, and yellow
- Easy to use — just cast out, let bounce on bottom, and reel in — easy peasy!
- Keep that curly tail fluttering.



## SPINNER BAITS

- These are bigger baits and have some flashy blades to help attract the bass when they spin in the water.
- Can add plastics to these — curly tail grubs work great
- Try dragging these over top of fallen trees or rocks where bass may be hiding.



## CRANKBAITS

- Excellent for largemouth in shallow water
- Good size choice is 1/4 ounce
- Shad is a popular colour
- Dive approximately four feet down and then steadily reel them back or pause and reel to make it look like wounded bait fish (I use this method for plastics as well)



## BASS JIG (SKIRTED OR WEEDLESS)

- I, personally, have way too many of these! Need some more practice time!
- This lure is harder to use because you need to master the pitching and flipping techniques with a baitcaster.
- So some advice — focus on the top four, then move onto this one once you have mastered the others.



Of all of these baits, my favourite by far is using plastics and rigging them Texas-style!

For more information, check out:

<http://bassonline.com>

<https://yourbassguy.com>

<https://www.tacklelab.co>

## How To Setup A Texas Rig

**#1**

Insert hook into nose of bait.



**#2**

Exit about 1/4 inch from tip of nose.



**#3**

Pull hook through body, rotate hook and embed the point into bait.



**#4**

Embed the point right under or through the bait surface at an angle that keeps the bait straight.



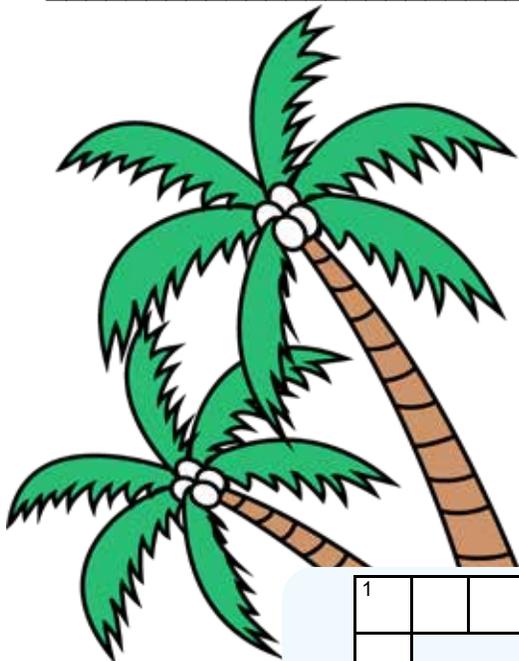
**#5**

Attach bullet weight to line.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

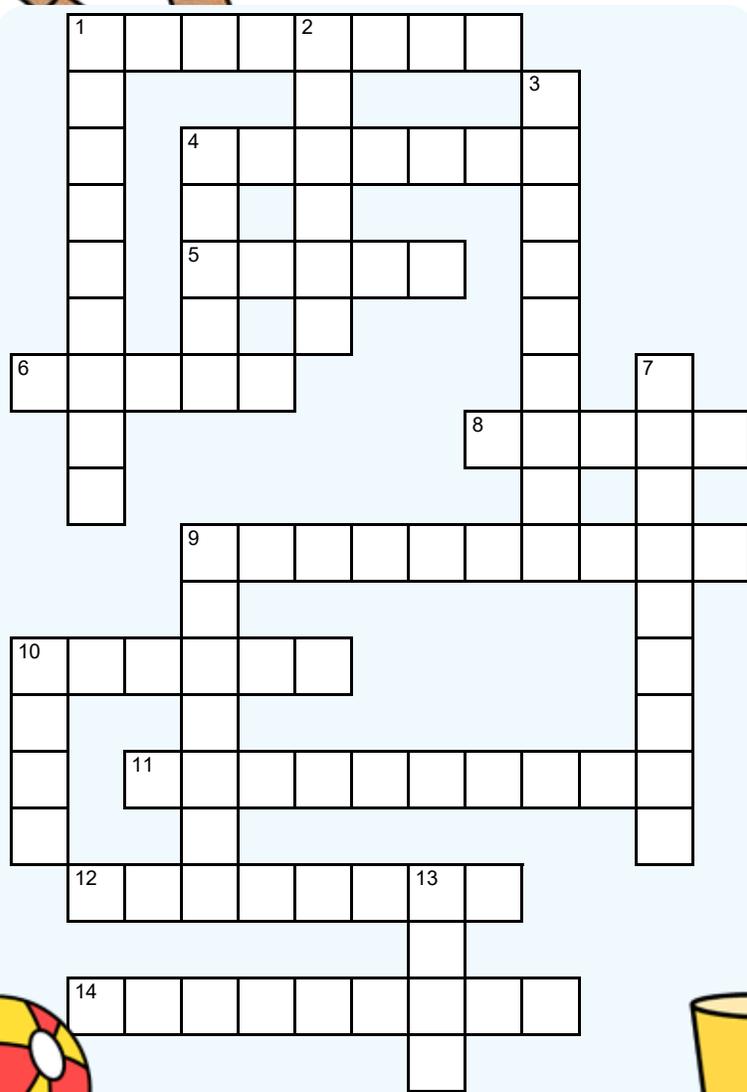


### Word Bank

- |            |            |            |
|------------|------------|------------|
| CRAB       | PICNIC     | SUNBURN    |
| FLIP FLOPS | SANDCASTLE | SUNGLASSES |
| JELLYFISH  | SHORE      | SURFBOARD  |
| LIFEGUARD  | SHOVEL     | SWIMSUIT   |
| OCEAN      | SNORKEL    | TOWEL      |
| PAIL       | SUNBLOCK   | WAVES      |

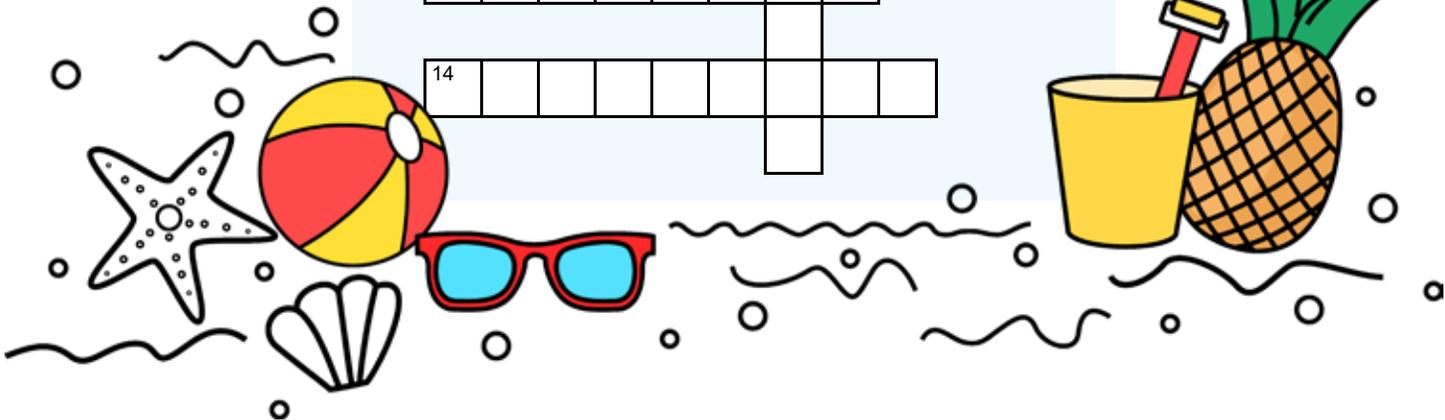
#### Across

1. What most people wear on the beach.
4. Allows you to breath underwater.
5. It's right next to the beach.
6. They wash in at the seaside.
8. Use this to dry off.
9. You might build this on the beach.
10. Lunch on the beach.
11. Helps you to see on a sunny day.
12. Protects your skin from the sun.
14. He or she watches swimmers.



#### Down

1. Use this to ride the waves.
2. Used for digging.
3. Shoes for the beach.
4. The edge of the water.
7. Sea animal that stings.
9. Watch out! If you turn red, you have this.
10. Use this to collect sand, water, or shells.
13. Little animal with pinchers.



# SUMMER FUN

## Word Search Puzzle



- |            |            |            |
|------------|------------|------------|
| BAREFOOT   | FISHING    | PICNIC     |
| BASEBALL   | FLIP FLOPS | POPSICLE   |
| BEACH      | FRIENDS    | ROAD TRIP  |
| BICYCLE    | FRISBEE    | SPRINKLERS |
| CAMPING    | GAMES      | SUNSHINE   |
| COOKOUT    | ICE CREAM  | SWIMMING   |
| FAIRGROUND | LEMONADE   | VACATION   |
| FIREWORKS  | OUTDOORS   | WATER PARK |



awesome!

# 50 THINGS

## TO DO THIS SUMMER!



Post your pictures to Twitter using #GRCA50things or to Facebook (GrandRiverConservation)

Download Part 2 at [www.grandriver.ca/GRCA50things](http://www.grandriver.ca/GRCA50things)

### RANGER

- 21. Bike a trail
- 22. Build a raft
- 23. Go on a walk barefoot
- 24. Find a geocache
- 25. Hunt for fossils and bones
- 26. Go star gazing
- 27. Climb a huge hill
- 28. Explore a cave
- 29. Catch a fish
- 30. Learn to make an animal call

- 36. Make a home for a wild animal
- 37. Check out the creatures under a log
- 38. Go on a nature walk at night
- 39. Pick raspberries growing in the wild
- 40. Catch a crayfish

### ADVENTURER

- 1. Go on a long hike
- 2. Roll down a really big hill
- 3. Camp out in the wild
- 4. Build a den
- 5. Go on a picnic
- 6. Skip a stone
- 7. Run around in the rain
- 8. Fly a kite
- 9. Build a sandcastle
- 10. Go swimming

### DISCOVERER

- 11. Hold a frog or toad
- 12. Hug a tree
- 13. Make a trail with sticks
- 14. Play in the mud
- 15. Go tubing on the water
- 16. Build an inuksuk
- 17. Make a flower chain
- 18. Plant a tree or wildflower
- 19. Play Pooh sticks
- 20. Hold a scary beast

### TRACKER

- 31. Hunt for bugs
- 32. Find a tadpole
- 33. Catch a falling leaf
- 34. Track wild animals
- 35. Find your way with a map

### EXPLORER



- 41. Find a feather
- 42. Set up a snail race
- 43. Explore inside a tree
- 44. Go bird watching
- 45. Explore a wild place
- 46. Cook on a campfire
- 47. Make a grass trumpet
- 48. Canoe down a river
- 49. Discover what's in a pond
- 50. Watch a movie under the stars



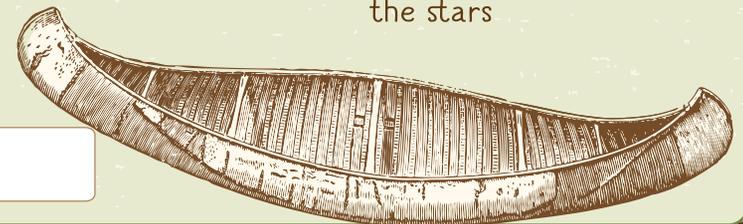
GRAND RIVER PARKS AND NATURE CENTRES

[WWW.GRANDRIVER.CA/PARKS](http://WWW.GRANDRIVER.CA/PARKS)

[WWW.GRANDRIVER.CA/NATURECENTRES](http://WWW.GRANDRIVER.CA/NATURECENTRES)



THIS LIST BELONGS TO:





awesome!

# 50 THINGS<sup>1</sup> 2

## TO DO THIS SUMMER (& WINTER!)



Post your pictures to Twitter using **#GRCA50things** or to Facebook (GrandRiverConservation)

### ADVENTURER

- 51. Climb a tree
- 52. Let a bug land on your hand
- 53. Skate on an outdoor rink
- 54. Go paddleboating
- 55. Jump in a pile of leaves
- 56. Balance on a fallen tree
- 57. Toboggan down a big hill
- 58. Swing on a rope
- 59. Have a snowball fight
- 60. Sing songs around a campfire

### DISCOVERER

- 61. Watch a sunrise
- 62. Make a mud pie
- 63. Collect acorns
- 64. Eat lunch in the park
- 65. Build a snowman
- 66. Walk along a dam
- 67. Make a snow angel
- 68. Create some wild art
- 69. Swim in a lake or river
- 70. Make something with things you find



**GRAND RIVER PARKS AND NATURE CENTRES**

[WWW.GRANDRIVER.CA/PARKS](http://WWW.GRANDRIVER.CA/PARKS)

[WWW.GRANDRIVER.CA/NATURECENTRES](http://WWW.GRANDRIVER.CA/NATURECENTRES)



THIS LIST BELONGS TO:



Download Part I at [www.grandriver.ca/GRCA50things](http://www.grandriver.ca/GRCA50things)



### RANGER

- 71. Plant it, grow it, eat it
- 72. ID five native trees
- 73. Help set up a tent
- 74. Learn a bird call
- 75. Sit silently in the woods
- 76. Build a birdhouse
- 77. Steer a canoe
- 78. Roast marshmallows on a campfire
- 79. Use a magnifying glass to observe a bug
- 80. Eat an apple straight from a tree

### TRACKER

- 81. Play hide and seek outside
- 82. ID three bird species
- 83. ID a set of animal tracks
- 84. Find a feather on the beach
- 85. Go on a really long bike ride

- 86. Make fresh tracks in the snow
- 87. Spot a turtle sunning on a log
- 88. Hunt for treasure on the beach
- 89. Feed a bird from your hand
- 90. Observe an ant colony

### EXPLORER

- 91. Make a tower with rocks
- 92. Walk along a long trail
- 93. Collect rocks on the beach
- 94. Make a dandelion wish
- 95. Make shadow puppets
- 96. Jump over waves
- 97. Spot a bat in flight
- 98. Dig deep holes on the beach that fill with water
- 99. Explore what's in a bucket of pond water
- 100. Ski or snowshoe through the forest