



YRPC Weekly News

May 6, 2026, Issue 1

The Sturgeon Are Running This Week!

By: Phil Sylla, President YRPC

Arnie, watch a rite of nature older than the dinosaurs as lake sturgeon, a giant, ancient fish, make their spawning run in the Yellow River. Go to Connor's Bridge, located at the intersection of Connor's Bridge Road and Austin Lake Road a few miles east of Webster. There they can be seen through shallow water under the bridge. DNR Fish Biologist Craig Roberts recommends wearing polarized sunglasses and picking a sunny day for best visibility. The "run" has been sporadic this year due to varying temperatures.

The sturgeon are running upstream from Big Yellow Lake to a key spawning spot near the bridge. The 1979 state-record rod-and-reel catch of 170.5 pounds and 79 inches was caught in Big Yellow Lake. These ancient, slow-growing, and long-lived fish (up to 100 years old) are a threatened species in many areas, but are managed for sustainable hook-and-line fishing in Wisconsin. Sturgeon in Wisconsin spawn annually in mid-April to early June when water temperatures reach 53 - 60 F.

The Yellow River is one of only six rivers in the United States that supports natural sturgeon reproduction. Not many people have seen one. Take a picture if you can. Then send it to contact@yrpc.ltd or just reply to this email and attach your picture, and we will include it in a future YRPC weekly news. Parking is available just a few yards west of the bridge on the north side of Austin Lake Road.

Arnie, stay tuned for next week's article to read about a Case Study featuring YRPC and the Yellow River Watershed presented at the Wisconsin Lakes and Rivers Convention in Stevens Point this past April. We will also share an article just published by the UW Madison Division of Extension featuring: YRPC, Pierce County Land Conservation Department, WDNR and Water Action Volunteers.