

Workshop Descriptions

Registration 9AM – 9:30am

Saturday - Session 1 (9:45 AM - 12:50 PM):

Snowshoe Mountain Hike: Experience the beauty of serene Mount Christopher by snowshoe in the crisp morning. Participants will learn how to properly select and fit a pair of snowshoes before tackling a challenging but short expedition to the summit. Participants will also learn what essentials they should bring along for a safe and prepared adventure. Enjoy learning the forest ecology along the way before reaching the views at the top of the surrounding Western Foothills.

Hiking Preparedness: Experience the magic of winter hiking and backpacking! In the stillness of the season, the sound of wind moving through frozen pine needles creates a serene, otherworldly atmosphere. Winter backpacking and mountaineering offer a unique opportunity to explore hidden peaks and trails that few dare to traverse. In this hands-on workshop, you'll learn essential skills for planning and enjoying your own winter adventures. Topics include:

- Winter traversing techniques.
- Packing strategies for day trips and overnight excursions.
- Choosing and using winter camping gear, including sled pulks.
- Layering and staying warm in cold conditions.

We'll begin indoors to review equipment and foundational skills before heading outside to practice step techniques with and without snowshoes. Together, we'll set up a mock winter camp, where you'll discover tips and tricks to make your winter camping experience more comfortable and enjoyable. Embrace the adventure of the season and take your outdoor skills to the next level!

Learn to Hunt: Introduction to Rifle Shooting: Have you recently completed your hunter education or maybe you're interested in recreational target shooting? Or maybe you're simply looking for more information on the various types of firearms, action types, and what they are best used for. This workshop will fully prepare you with a focus on safe gun handling, types of rifles and their uses, and how to shoot accurately.

In this workshop we'll cover:

- Safe ways to handle various firearms
- Types of common firearms
- Action types of rifles
- Differences between bullet calibers
- Choosing the right firearm for hunting or target shooting
- How to store and secure your firearms.

This workshop will be a blend of hands-on demonstration, practice, and live fire exercises led by professional staff and range safety officers. You will soon be prepared for the upcoming season whether it's hunting, or a day at the range. This is great for the new hunter or shooter, and an excellent refresher for experienced folks.

Wild Game Cooking in the Outdoors: There's a growing number of folks returning to wild game choices for healthy, sustainable table fare and for good reason. Wild game is nutritious and delicious, and with a little know-how, it's quite easy to incorporate into your lifestyle. Explore new ways to prepare wild game meat using recipes that are easy to follow and do at home. You'll leave with recipes and new ideas and a deeper connection to where your food comes from. Hunting, cooking, and sharing a meal of wild game is a special way to celebrate your harvest with others. Game meat may vary depending on what we can obtain.

Ice Fishing 101: Maine has some amazing opportunities to get out on the hard water. Like most states, Maine offers fishing 365 days a year, however, in the winter, ice fishing adds additional fishing opportunities. In this session, participants will learn the importance of ice safety, what equipment is needed to get started, how to safely drill holes, set traps and vertical jig artificial baits. We will cover warm and cold-water fisheries and tactics to be successful and if all goes to plan, we may even catch a fish! Participants will be introduced to different types of equipment including shelters, augers, traps, baits, and more! Join us for some fun on the ice, but be prepared, it can get cold out there so dress in warm layers!

Saturday - Session 2 (2:15 PM - 5:00 PM):

Map and Compass: While GPS devices are popular, mastering basic map and compass skills remains essential for backcountry navigation. In this course, you'll learn how to:

- Read and interpret topographic maps.
- Properly use a compass to orient a map, set a bearing, and plot a course.
- Apply advanced techniques like triangulation and declination compensation.
- Plan effective and safe routes through wilderness terrain.

Discover how enjoyable and empowering it is to navigate using these timeless skills, and gain confidence in finding your way, no matter where the trail leads!

Campfire Cooking: Have you ever tried getting that smoky fire-cooked taste, only to wind up with a charred mess? In this class we will teach you the art of fire cooking. We will introduce cooking directly in the coals with foil, Dutch ovens and cast-iron skillets. This important backcountry skill isn't quite as hard as it may seem; with the right direction from our experienced teachers, you will be baking up some great recipes in no time!

Learn to Trap: Under Ice Beaver Trapping: Trapping for fur bearers has is a tradition that goes back thousands of years. Today's trappers participate in this activity for various reasons. Trapping helps keep wildlife populations stable and healthy, protects property and habitat, and provides biologists with valuable data to help prevent and manage disease and predict population trends. It's an exciting way to spend time outdoors, while learning the habits and habitats of various species. Learn about the biology and identification of furbearers; types of traps; how and where to set a trap; skinning; and fur handling. We will explore the techniques of late season under ice beaver trapping using various trap types and ways to set them properly and safely. We will also provide information on getting your trapper safety certificate and trapping license.

Learn to Hunt: Introduction to Archery/Bowhunting: Archery hunting continues to grow in popularity and Maine's archery hunting opportunities have increased to include the use of a traditional bow and arrow and crossbow, with a generous season and additional opportunities. You do not need to have completed archery safety to attend this workshop. Whether you are looking for a new recreational hobby or interested in harvesting your next meal, participants will focus on safe handling, the difference between bows and how to shoot safe and accurately.

In this workshop we'll cover:

- Equipment
- Safe handling practices
- Differences between bows on the market
- How to store and secure your bow
- Ethical Shots
- Tree stands

This workshop will be a blend of hands-on demonstration, practice, and shooting exercises led by professional staff and range safety officers. You will soon be prepared for the upcoming season whether it's hunting, or a day at the archery range. This is great for the new hunter or shooter, and an excellent refresher for experienced folks.

Exploring Maine's Fishing Opportunities: Laws, Equipment and Access

With over 6,000 lakes and ponds, 32,000 miles of rivers and streams and more coastline than any other state in the US, Maine has a lot of water to explore in every season! In this session, participants will begin inside by exploring and understanding Maine's Fishing regulations. We'll discuss seasons, species identification, bag limits, types of angling methods, identifying where to go fishing, how to find access, discovering what resources are available to you, and what you need to get started regardless of the season. You'll have a chance to handle various types of equipment such as spin cast and fly-fishing set ups, tackle, and other equipment. We'll cover species specifics and each participant will receive fish ID cards and posters to take home.

This will be a primarily indoors discussion and hands on trouble shooting some of the common "fixes" and maintenance that needs to be done to your gear. Should time allow, we'll take a trip down to the ice for a deeper look at ice fishing techniques and tactics.

Sunday - Session 3 (9:45 AM - 12:50 PM):

Rock Climbing 101: Skills & Safety

This workshop provides a hands-on introduction to rock climbing. We will conduct this at our indoor climbing wall and discuss outdoor climbing skills and equipment. We begin with a brief introduction to rock climbing, focusing on safety skills for bouldering and top rope climbing. Participants will then have time to practice.

We will work on top rope climbing skills, including proper fitting of harnesses, helmets, and climbing shoes. You will receive detailed instruction and practice in tying the most important climbing knots. The core of the session features a short lesson on belaying, covering necessary equipment, verbal commands, and lowering procedures.

The workshop concludes with dedicated time to climb, allowing participants to practice their knots and climbing skills, with the opportunity to practice belaying under supervision if they feel comfortable.

Winter Survival: Are you ready to face an unexpected night in the wilderness? Whether caught in a sudden snowstorm or lost during a short snowshoe hike, being prepared can make all the difference.

In this workshop, you'll learn essential survival skills, including:

- Dressing for unpredictable conditions.
- Building a shelter to stay warm and protected.

- Starting and maintaining a fire in challenging environments.
- Effective signaling techniques to call for help.

Equip yourself with the knowledge and confidence to handle the unexpected and safely navigate outdoor emergencies.

Ice Fishing: For this on-site expedition, we will take to the ice in search for an action-packed, flag popping experience. Similar to the introduction course, we will cover basic tip up set up, ice safety, and identifying fishy areas. We will also cover vertical jigging techniques to take full advantage of catching fish and passing the time. The added time in this block will allow for additional questions and discussions as we replicate what it will be like for you to plan own ice fishing expedition. Bring your own chair, extra gloves and a warm hat and let's catch some fish!

Fly Tying: Fly tying is a hobby that dates back before fishing as we know it. Fly fishing anglers have developed a keen sense of how to read the streams and how to “match the hatch”. A skill that is handy for any angler to know is how to tie your own flies (they become expensive when learning). In this workshop participants will learn the different styles and types of flies, what is the difference between a wet fly and a dry fly? What equipment is needed to tie flies and even create a fly or two or three to take home themselves! This workshop is designed for all experience levels but will target beginners. All materials will be provided to be borrowed, though if you have your own, feel free to bring them along!

Wild Game Cooking: Discover the delicious world of wild game cooking! As more people turn to wild game for healthy and sustainable table fare, this workshop will explore ways to prepare wild game meat for your next meal using recipes that are easy to follow and do at home. You'll leave with recipes, new ideas, and a deeper connection to where your food comes from. Please note that game meat selections may vary based on availability.