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# *Scuba Emporium*

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## *1976 Underwater Hunter*

You might think that due to the fact I love fish at dinner time I would want to catch my own. That is not why I did this one. It was done to protect fish more than kill them. I do believe that if we eat meat, pig, fish, cow or whatever, it is not a bad thing to hunt them. I think it is bad when one complains about the killing and has a hotdog in their hand. Come on let's be real. If you eat anything with eyes it was killed for you. So to go out and catch your own food is not all bad.

So as a kid I was always told that I did not have to worry about the snakes, I saw in the local lakes and quarries, you see snakes do not bite underwater, I was told. So here I am walking into the quarry in Lemont, I walk past a small pool with a few dead blue gills in it, which was odd and did get my attention. Then out of the water comes this big snake with a fish in its mouth. So now I see that they can bite me underwater. Needless to say that dive, my head was looking more behind than in front. Over the years I have run into many snakes, I hate snakes. But I started to carry a spear gun, like that was going to protect me. Well that was a new adventure. I would sometimes see a nice pike or bass and nailed them. We would then, clean and cook them on shore or take them home. You cannot beat the taste of fresh fish. So this made me the Under Water Hunter. By 1976 I was teaching classes and doing a lot of Lake Michigan diving. We would carry our guns and get perch, bass and others, always for consumption. I was always sure to use the proper size gun and tip for what I was hunting. On a dive in a local lake I happened to be following two guys that were hunting with one of the biggest guns I had ever seen. As I swam around, behind them, I saw a lot of fish torn in half, this was sad. These new divers had a trident tip (three points) and it would just tear the fish in half. The guys left the torn fish and went to kill another. When I got back to the store I knew I needed a course to educate people about underwater hunting. The goal was of course to teach but also sell the proper gun and tip based on what the diver was hunting. I made targets and had the student divers learn to hit the target in the proper area. Once they had it down, we went out, got fish and had dinner, nice!

I have to tell you that nothing is better than being out in the ocean and getting some lobsters and a grouper and have a nice fire on the beach, where we cook our meal and then sit around and tell some of the best stories. So today I still offer the hunter course but not often and it is usually done when we sell a spear pole or gun to someone heading off to the ocean. You can hunt locally but need an Illinois fishing license and can get rough game fish and pan fish. I suggest you read the law before heading off to do a dive.

Do not kill for pleasure, or fun, if you are not going to use the catch why not just fire at milk jugs? We need to protect and preserve the underwater world.