



THE WILDLIFE SAMPLER

Newsletter of The New England Chapter
Of The Wildlife Society
Spring 2013

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

**2013 New England Chapter TWS
Spring workshop and business meeting
Thursday April 25, 2013
10:00 AM – 2:00 PM
Bass Pro Shops, Foxboro, MA**

Please join the New England Chapter of the Wildlife Society for our annual chapter business meeting and workshop. The morning portion of the workshop will include Chapter updates and award presentations followed by a presentation on raptor and reptile handling, capture, and transport. The afternoon portion will include a hands-on raptor and reptile handling certification workshop. The afternoon is limited to twenty participants, and preregistration is required. A complete agenda is included in this newsletter on page 6. Please join us!

**Northeast Association of Fish and Wildlife
Agencies
69th Annual Northeast Fish and Wildlife
Conference
Saratoga Springs, NY**

Conference Theme: "Fish and Wildlife Means
Business"
Sunday, April 7 – Tuesday, April 9, 2013
The Saratoga Hilton Hotel

This annual event attracts over 500 natural resources professionals in the fields of wildlife biology, fisheries and fisheries management, information and education and law enforcement. The event provides opportunities for education, discussion, and exchanging of ideas. Highlights include: over 50 workshop sessions, keynote speakers, poster displays, and social networking events. For more information on the conference including the schedule and registration, please visit NEAFWA's website: <http://www.neafwa.org/>.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I've started to see signs of spring, even after getting up to 20 inches of snow during mid-March throughout portions of Massachusetts. The March sun is quickly melting that snow. My family's farm is in full operation during maple sugaring season. This will be the last president's message that I write for the New England Chapter newsletter. I have thoroughly enjoyed serving you as president of the Chapter. I started out as the secretary/treasurer for the Chapter six years ago and have worked with many great people throughout my tenure. I appreciate all the help and support of my fellow executive board and committee members. I still intend to be involved with the Chapter and hope to assist on one of the committees. Please consider becoming more involved in the Chapter by volunteering to be on a committee. Having sufficient support will make a stronger, more effective Chapter. One of my goals has been to provide more educational opportunities to enhance members' professional knowledge and experience in the wildlife field. I have been very pleased with the attendance at our workshops and have received positive feedback for the topics that we have covered. David Paulson, the Chapter's program coordinator, has done a great job at organizing these workshops. We have also received considerable student interest in the Chapter. On the downside, budget cuts continue to restrict both state and federal agencies making out-of-state travel to attend workshops difficult. The upcoming spring workshop will be on raptor and reptile restraint and handling and will be held April 25th at Bass Pro Shops in Foxboro, Mass. This is a topic that I do not have much experience with so I look forward to participating in the workshop. I hope that I will see you there! If you have any ideas for future topics that could expand your professional knowledge, please contact your state Rep for the Chapter. You can find them on our website at <http://joomla.wildlife.org/newengland/>.

STATE REPORTS

Connecticut

Jack Barclay - CT Representative to the Executive Committee

No report submitted.

Massachusetts

*Tim Cozine, USDA/Wildlife Services- MA
Representative to the Executive Committee*

Report Vernal Pools and Rare Species Online

MassWildlife asks citizen scientists, sportsmen, birders, naturalists and others to collect information on vernal pools and report rare wildlife or plants. A new electronic reporting system, the Vernal Pool & Rare Species (VPRS) Information System, has been developed by MassWildlife with support from federal and state agencies. The website allows the public to electronically submit their observations of vernal pool and state-listed, rare species through the web. Anyone submitting reports can access all their reports and see the report status (in progress, submitted, accepted, etc.) within the VPRS system. The website can be found at www.mass.gov/dfwele/dfw/nhesp/species_info/vprs_home.htm.

Endangered Species Fact Sheets

Fact sheets for all state-listed birds, fish, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, invertebrates and plants have been posted, with the exception of sea turtles and five whale species. Each fact sheet includes an image or drawing of the species, a brief description, listing of similar species, habitat preferences, life history, range map, management recommendations and references. To find the fact sheets, visit MassWildlife's Natural Heritage and Endangered Species web page at www.mass.gov/dfwele/dfw/nhesp/species_info/mesa_list/mesa_list.htm.

Cottontail Survey Continues

MassWildlife is still asking the public's assistance to assess the distribution and population of New England cottontails, the only cottontail rabbit species native to the northeastern United States. MassWildlife biologists want to remind hunters, highway department workers, animal control officers, and other interested citizens across the state to provide DFW with cottontail carcasses or cottontail skulls for the survey. Specimens from the central and western part of the state are

highly desirable, because fewer samples from these areas have been collected. Carcasses or cottontail heads should be handled with gloves and should be placed in a plastic bag and frozen until they can be dropped off at the MassWildlife Field Headquarters in West Boylston, or at a District Office or Hatchery. Please include contact information, date of collection, and detailed location information such as street and town or GPS coordinates. The New England Cottontail Initiative involves partnerships with state and federal natural resource agencies, conservation organizations, and other large landowners focusing on surveys, habitat identification, and habitat restoration efforts.

BioMap2 Town Reports Available Online

The MassWildlife Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program has announced that updated BioMap2 Town Reports are available online at www.mass.gov/dfwele/dfw/nhesp/land_protection/biomap/biomap_townreports.htm and through the BioMap2 Map Viewer at <http://maps.massgis.state.ma.us/dfg/biomap2.htm>.

New Spring Eagle Count in Early April

Eagle and wildlife enthusiasts are asked to participate in a new statewide spring eagle count on April 5, 2013, with a backup date of April 12, 2013. This effort will include a concentrated survey of the major rivers, lakes, and reservoirs across the Commonwealth organized by MassWildlife. The survey will be conducted by MassWildlife staff and volunteers. Teams will check known eagle territories and explore areas with potential eagle habitat to try to locate previously unidentified eagle nests. Additionally, MassWildlife encourages anyone to submit eagle sightings throughout the year by email to natural.heritage@state.ma.us or by postal service to "Eagle Survey", MassWildlife, Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program, 100 Hartwell Street, Suite 230, West Boylston, MA 01583. The new spring Bald Eagle Survey will replace the Division's long-standing Midwinter Bald Eagle Survey.

Turkey Bag Limit Clarification

The printed version of the 2013 MA Guide to Hunting, Fishing and Trapping omitted information regarding bag restrictions in the spring turkey season. There was no reference to the bearded bird requirement in the spring season. The correct bag limit is: either 2 bearded birds during the spring season, 1 per day, with NO fall turkey allowed, or 1 bearded bird in spring season and 1 bird of either sex in fall season. No hunter may take 2 birds in the

fall season. The bag limit information has been corrected in the online 2013 Guide to Hunting, Fishing and Trapping at <http://www.eregulations.com/massachusetts/huntingandfishing/wild-turkey/>.

New Hampshire

*Mark Ellingwood, NH Fish and Game, NH
Representative to the Executive Committee*

Waterfowl Survey

NH Fish and Game biologists flew our 62nd annual winter waterfowl survey of coastal areas on January 8th. Some 6,220 waterfowl were observed which was about 16% above the long-term. The count included 450 black ducks, 1275 greater scaup, 909 common eiders, 2964 Canada geese plus smaller numbers of seven other species. Great Bay winters the bulk (81%) of waterfowl in coastal areas. Every state along the east coast from Maine to Florida conducts this winter survey during the first full week of January each year and this provides waterfowl managers with an annual index of wintering waterfowl in the Atlantic Flyway.

Non-Game and Endangered Program 25th Anniversary

We are excited to kick off the New Year with the announcement of the 25th Anniversary of our Nongame and Endangered Wildlife Program! 25 years of protecting and restoring rare species and their habitats is certainly something to celebrate! From bald eagles, osprey and terns soaring the sky, to American marten and New England cottontails scurrying the fields and forests – there is much to celebrate.

Bear Season Results

The 2012 New Hampshire bear season concluded at 806 bears which represents a new state record bear harvest exceeding the previous record of 803 bears (2003). The 2012 harvest was nearly double the 2011 level (418 bears) and 37% above the preceding 5-year average (588 bears). The harvest consisted of 433 males and 373 females resulting in a harvest sex ratio of 1.2 males per female.

Deer Season Update

The statewide total (11,612) was up 4.5% from 2012. The harvest in most units was similar to or up from 2011, especially in more southern units where populations have recovered more quickly and either sex

hunting opportunities were increased for 2012. While statewide harvests over 11,500 have only been achieved 6 times in the past 50 years, population recovery and harvests similar to 2007 levels have been elusive in many units. Snow depths so far this winter have benefitted deer and another winter of below average severity would help. Harvest data are being analyzed in detail to determine the age-sex structure and physical condition of harvested deer on a WMU specific basis. The “2012 NH Wildlife Harvest Summary”, available in hard copy and on-line in late March, will provide additional detail on the results of the 2012 deer and other big game season results.

Deer Research Update

Our research study, “Assessing Productivity and Physical Condition of White-Tailed Deer in NH,” which began in 2010 is continuing this winter. Biological samples are collected mainly from road-killed does from January through May. This study looks to provide information on ovulation rates, fetal counts and femur fat content.

Fall 2012 Turkey Season Update

The fall 2012 harvest of 1,056 turkeys was 64.2% greater than the fall 2011 harvest of 643 turkeys. The combined shotgun season, (October 15-19th) harvest of 706 turkeys, and archery season, (September 15 – December 15th) harvest of 350 totaled 1,056 turkeys, which surpassed the 2010 record harvest of 1,010 turkeys. Two contributing factors to the 2012 increase were good hatching success during summer of 2012, and the scarcity of nuts in the woods this fall which made turkeys somewhat more vulnerable to hunters.

Bear Research Update

Two bear research projects initiated during 2010 are winding down with one recently finished and another nearing completion. The study “Assessing the Efficacy of Wildlife Ordinances as a Management Tool for Reducing Human-Bear Conflicts in New Hampshire” was completed in December 2012. This research found that public support for ordinances was high indicating that landowners are willing to adjust their behaviors in an effort to reduce conflicts with bears. Ordinances did effectively reduce the amount of attractants available to bears thereby reducing conflicts. However, ordinance compliance was generally low. This low level of compliance appeared to be caused by the lack of awareness that

ordinances existed as well as limited enforcement of ordinance rules by local authorities.

The second study, "Assessing the Efficacy of Translocation as a Nuisance Bear Management Tool and Evaluating the Success of Black Bear Rehabilitation in New Hampshire" remains ongoing and will be completed during spring 2013. Remaining telemetry collars from study bears are still being recovered and collar collection should be completed by late March 2013. Data analysis is ongoing and conclusions are preliminary at this time. This study will provide information on the movement, dispersal, mortality, hunter utilization rates, nuisance behavior and fidelity to human-related foods sources of translocated nuisance bears and released rehabilitated bears.

47th North American Moose Conference & Workshop

The annual North American Moose Conference and Workshop is being held this year in Whitefield NH at the Mountain View Grand Hotel May 20 – 24. The conference is being sponsored by the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department, Maine Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, and Vermont Fish and Game. This conference and its attendant published proceedings (the scientific, peer-reviewed journal 'Alces') are the primary formats for the exchange of information on the status, research and management of moose populations in North America. Given our changing climate and the vulnerability of moose (a species existing here in the southern edge of its range) to warmer temperatures, this year's conference should yield some very informative papers on current moose status and research efforts in North America. To learn more or to register, click here:

<http://nre.unh.edu/47th-north-american-moose-conference-workshop>.

Vermont

Paul Hamelin, VT Fish and Wildlife Department, VT Representative to the Executive Committee

No report submitted.

Rhode Island

Brian Tefft, RI DEM, Division of Fish and Wildlife, RI Representative to the Executive Committee

Personnel Changes

Like most natural resources agencies, Rhode Island DEM continues to undergo personnel changes and associated staff re-assignments of duties and responsibilities. Our Division of Fish & Wildlife has seen two notable changes. The first is the promotion of Jason Osenkowski from Supervising Biologist to Deputy Chief of the Division. This move fills the vacancy created by a retirement nearly three years ago of the former Deputy Chief. Congratulations Jay!!

Second, Catherine Sparks, Chief, RIDEM Division of Forest Environment who has been supervising both the Forestry and Fish & Wildlife Divisions for four years, was promoted to Assistant Director of the Bureau of Natural Resources. Cathy's promotion leaves vacant both the positions of Chief of Forest Environment and Chief of Fish & Wildlife. As of the time of this writing it is unknown if and when either of these positions will be filled.

Monitoring Bat Populations in Rhode Island

In 2010 the Division initiated a series of projects to help gain a better understanding of the status of bat populations in Rhode Island. Since 2010, over 100 man-made structures have been surveyed for the presence of maternal colonies of bats. As a result, the Division has generated a list of bat maternal colonies in the state. In 2012, exit counts were conducted at 15 locations, with priority given to those known to contain Little Brown bats (*Myotis lucifugus*) or large colonies (i.e. >100) of Big Brown bats (*Eptesicus fuscus*). Exit counts are conducted twice, once during the pre-volant period (last week of May and 3rd week of June) and again during the post-volant period (July 1st through July 31st). As part of a multi-state effort, the Division has established four acoustic survey transect routes in accordance with protocols developed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and N.Y. Department of Environmental Conservation. Transect routes were driven a minimum of two times between June 1 and July 15 following survey protocols with respect to weather conditions, time of start, driving speed, etc. An Anabat ultrasonic detector (on loan from the USFWS) was secured in the bed of a pickup truck and used to record bat calls along the route. Mist net surveys were conducted in the Great Swamp Management Area, South Kingstown, and at several other locations in the state. A total of 99 bats of four species were affixed with bat rings (i.e. wing bands) during the

course of 2012 summer surveys. In 2010, a cooperative agreement was reached between the Division and the R.I. Department of Health to collect bat specimens that were submitted to the Rabies Lab and subsequently tested negative for the rabies virus. To date, more than 600 bats have been collected from the Lab.

During the winter of 2011-12, several abandoned World War II military installations (i.e. concrete gun emplacement and ammunition bunkers) were examined for the possible presence of hibernating bats. At one location several Northern Long-eared (*Myotis septentrionalis*) and Big Brown bats were found hibernating within the subterranean portions of the structure. This is possibly the first documented occurrence of hibernating Northern-Long-eared bats in Rhode Island. Data for sites surveyed this winter are being compiled. Additional sites will be added this as they become known.

American Black Duck Trapping

This winter the Division began using different equipment and strategies in order to capture American Black Ducks (ABDU) for banding purposes. In prior year's the Division relied on swim-in style or floating traps, and baited sites during daylight hours. While success rates were okay they did not compare well with our neighboring State of Connecticut, especially during last year's mild winter when ABDU were well dispersed and using natural food sources. Therefore it was decided to more closely use Connecticut's strategies and equipment for this year's trapping effort.

As a change in strategy, all capture sites were baited in pre-dawn hours in order to limit ABDU recognition of human disturbance of bait sites. Second, rocket netting was the primary capture technique utilized. The capture equipment was camouflaged with native *Spartina* sp. grasses in order to mimic the naturally occurring conditions ("wrack" lines) ABDU might recognize. A single swim-in style trap is being used at one site as it is not conducive to rocket netting and ABDU concentrations are high there. These techniques and strategies proved to be far more effective with near record number of ABDU banded in a limited number of net launches.

SECTION UPDATE

*John E. McDonald, Jr., Ph.D.
Northeast Section Representative and Fellow, The
Wildlife Society*

Our new TWS executive director, Dr. Ken Williams began March 4 and we are all glad to have him on board.

The Northeast Section Field Course will be held May 19th-June 1st in Castleton, Vermont. This is the fifth annual course and we are at full registration already.

The annual conference will be held October 5-10 in Milwaukee, WI. The deadline for paper submissions is April 12th.

A new technical review on the Effects of Bioenergy Development on Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat was released in December is available on the TWS Website. Another new review on Ungulate Management in National Parks of the United States and Canada was approved and should be on the website in the next few weeks.

TWS Council will be meeting March 24th and 25th in Arlington, VA.

TWS has developed a fact sheet on Captive Cervids and some template letters that can be used by members to engage state legislators when issues arise in their jurisdiction. It can be found on TWS' homepage under the 'Policy' link.

Members are always welcome to be in touch with me about any concerns or questions they have on TWS actions or how to get more involved: twsmdonald@gmail.com.





**New England Chapter of The Wildlife Society
Annual Spring Business Meeting & Workshop
Bass Pro Shops
1 Bass Pro Drive, Foxboro, MA 02035
Conservation Room***

**Thursday, April 25, 2013
10:00 am – 2:00 pm**

Raptor and Reptile Restraint and Handling

Agenda

- 9:30 – 10:00 am Refreshments and Registration
- 10:00 – 10:30 am Welcoming, Business Meeting, Awards
- 10:30 – 12:00 pm Raptor and Reptile Restraint and Handling. Learn the techniques of trapping, handling, transporting, and caring for healthy and injured animals. Live animals will be on display. Marla Isaac, New England Reptile & Raptor Exhibits
- 12:00 – 12:45 pm Lunch
- 12:45 – 2:00 pm Hands-on Raptor and Reptile Restraint and Handling Workshop. Marla Isaac, New England Reptile & Raptor Exhibits

*Attendees will learn how to properly handle and restrain birds of prey and reptiles (native and exotic). **Limited to 20 participants. Preregistration is required for the afternoon session. Preference will be awarded to existing Chapter members.***

The Wildlife Society Continuing Education – 3.0 Credits

Registration will occur at the door:

Members (Regular & Student) – Free

Student Nonmembers - \$5.00, which includes membership in the Chapter

Regular Nonmembers - \$10.00, which includes membership in the Chapter

Special Registration for the Afternoon Session:

Student Members – \$5.00 Regular Members - \$10.00

Includes all costs. All payments will be made day of workshop

RSVP BY April 19, 2013 David Paulson, david.paulson@state.ma.us

Note: Conservation Room is located on the lower level of Bass Pro Shops between the Fishing and Camping Sections

NEW ENGLAND CHAPTER OF THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY CONTACT INFORMATION

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Awards- Laura Saucier (CT)
Bylaws- Vacant
Conservation Affairs- Kim Royar (VT)
Info & Education- Michelle Cozine (MA)
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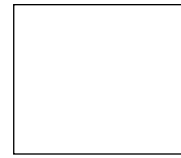
CHAPTER MERCHANDISE

The New England Chapter of The Wildlife Society has many items available for purchase displaying our logo! To view merchandise available for sale, follow the link on The Chapter's webpage: <http://joomla.wildlife.org/newengland/>. Items will be available for purchase at the Chapter's spring workshop or can be purchased by mail order.

The Wildlife Sampler is a biannual newsletter of the New England Chapter of The Wildlife Society that provides up-to-date information on both state (CT, MA, NH, RI, VT) and regional wildlife management programs and conservation issues. The success of this newsletter depends on **your** contributions. Suggestions regarding the content and format of the newsletter are always welcome, as are contributions of news articles, job announcements and meeting notices. Letters and commentaries offered for publication also will be considered. Contributions from student members and members employed by consulting firms, educational institutions, or other environmental organizations are encouraged. Newsletter items should be forwarded to your state representative at least a week in advance of the established deadline dates, **August 1 and February 1**. Please email documents as attachments in Microsoft Word format. See email addresses above. State representatives must submit newsletter items to the Editor by the deadline to be considered for inclusion in the newsletter.

New England Chapter TWS logo created by Paul Rego, CT DEP Wildlife Division

New England Chapter of The Wildlife Society
c/o Michelle Cozine
106 Metacomet Street
Belchertown, MA 01007



The New England Chapter of The Wildlife Society is a non-profit scientific and educational organization serving professionals in all areas of wildlife conservation. For more information about The Wildlife Society, visit: www.wildlife.org or the Chapter: <http://joomla.wildlife.org/newengland/>

NEW ENGLAND CHAPTER TWS MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name: _____

Affiliation: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State/Province: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

- \$ 10.00 Regular Membership Dues
 \$ 5.00 Student Membership Dues

- Renewal
 Renewal

- New Member
 New Member

I also would like to make a tax deductible donation to the Chapter in the amount of \$ _____.

Your contribution will be used to hire speakers for meetings and provide training/professional development opportunities for wildlife professionals.

Please make checks payable to "New England Chapter, TWS", and mail to: New England Chapter TWS,
c/o Jason Zimmer, MDFW, 195 Bournedale Road, Buzzards Bay, MA 02532