

Monitor Raptors this Winter

You can help monitor New York's birds of prey this winter. Some populations of winter raptors like northern har-



Jeff Nadler

riers and short-eared owls have declined as the amount of suitable habitat in New York has slowly decreased. DEC has been capturing, banding and radio-tagging raptors for several years from December through March, and volunteers are needed to help with this winter's survey. If you'd like to participate, contact a coordinator in a DEC region closest to you. Visit www.dec.ny.gov/about/70255.html for more information.

Helping Hellbenders

DEC and the Buffalo Zoo are teaming up to help New York's declining population of eastern hellbender salamanders. In the past year, 600 hellbender larvae



courtesy of the Missouri Department of Conservation

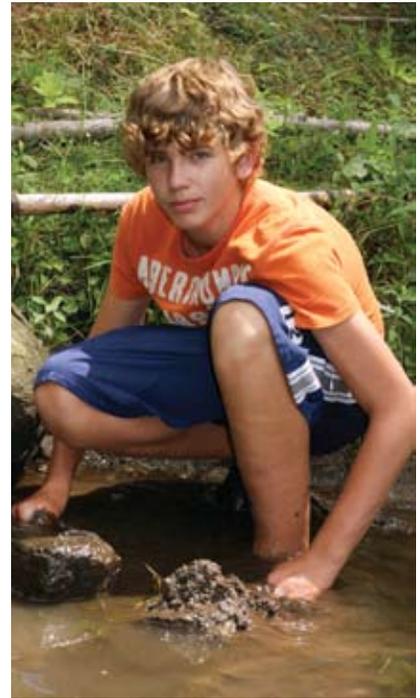
were hatched in the Buffalo Zoo from eggs DEC collected in the Allegheny River watershed. Some of the larvae were then transferred to be raised by staff at the Bronx and Binghamton Zoos. The NYS Department of Transportation also assisted by completing habitat restoration for juvenile hellbenders in the Allegheny River. In 2013, surviving members of the original 600 will be tagged and released into these sites, in hopes of restoring the population. For more information on the eastern hellbender, visit www.dec.ny.gov/animals/7160.html.

Operation Dark Night

More than 130 people were charged with a total of 250 offenses resulting from a major DEC enforcement effort dubbed "Operation Dark Night." Spanning from Montauk to Buffalo, the operation cracked down on deer poaching and focused on the illegal taking of deer by use of artificial lights. The process is oftentimes called "deer jacking" and occurs when a light is shown on a deer, "freezing" them and leaving the animal vulnerable. During a seven-week period, Environmental Conservation Officers patrolled rural locations in every part of the state except New York City, and held stakeouts during all hours of the night. The successful initiative sends the strong message that DEC will not tolerate poaching. Read more about Operation Dark Night online: www.dec.ny.gov/press/70879.html.

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Susan L. Shaffer

Summer Camp Registration

There's still time to register a child aged 12-17 for a DEC Environmental Education Camp this summer. Simply download an application form from DEC's website at www.dec.ny.gov/education/61769.html. To learn more about the camps, packing tips and other information on DEC camps, check out www.dec.ny.gov/education/29.html.

