



### Future ECO

This past fall, our son, Thomas, met Environmental Conservation Officer A.J. Glorioso. After learning about the work that ECOs do, my son was convinced he would one day be an ECO. Thomas asked if he could dress up as an ECO for Halloween and Officer Glorioso didn't hesitate to help us make Thomas's costume just right. He even took pictures with Thomas on Halloween. Since then, Officer Glorioso has gone out of his way to send Thomas information on environmental conservation in New York, and a Jr. badge. Thomas has since been studying animals that hibernate, tracking animals in the backyard, and discovering ways to conserve the environment!

Megan and Felix Donnelly  
Preston Hollow, Albany County

*It looks like you have a future conservation officer on your hands! ECOs are sworn police officers dedicated to protecting the state's natural resources and environment. To become an ECO, individuals must pass a written examination as well as attend a rigorous 26-week residential training program. For more information, visit DEC's website.*

### More Snowvember

*We heard from several people about our feature, "Snowvember: The Storm that Rocked Western New York" in our February issue. Many people had even more photos to share with us, so we put the additional photos in a special Snowvember album on our Facebook page. Visit us on Facebook to take a look.*

### Catching Trout

My nine-year-old granddaughter Julia caught this trout at our camp in the Adirondacks. She lives in Miami, FL, and gets to spend time here in the summer, which she just loves. She loves the outdoors and enjoys the magazine!

Michael Belmont



*That's an impressive catch. You both should be proud! Fishing is a great family friendly activity and New York is ripe with places to test the waters. For tips, ideas and where to visit, check out DEC's fishing webpages.*

### Snack Time

While kayaking on Canadice Lake, I was treated to an osprey engaging in an afternoon hunting session. The osprey ultimately snagged a bullhead from the west side of the lake.

Brian Shaw  
Rochester, Monroe County

*It looks like you were in the right place at the right time.*



## Greedy Raccoon

Here's a raccoon who raids our birdfeeder. It seems once these raccoons discover food, it becomes a game. We remove the corn before nightfall, but the next day the raccoons come earlier as a result!

Joanne Graham  
Genesee County



## Handsome Bluebird

I recently had the pleasure of photographing a pair of Eastern bluebirds. The birds were attracted to the mirror of my car, so here is a photo with that unique interaction.

Everet D. Regal  
Phoenix, Oswego County

*Great shot! It looks like this bluebird likes what he sees, but he's actually defending his territory against what he thinks is a competing male!*



## Fishers and Porcupines

*Retired DEC furbearer biologist Gary Will of Hamilton contacted us about our December article on fishers. Gary didn't agree that fishers are putting a serious dent in the porcupine population. Point taken, but Gary agrees with us that fishers are one of the few animals that will prey on porcupines. Gary also said that the article gives the impression that fishers need a great deal of forest cover, but he asserts (and we agree) that fishers are also found in areas that are a mosaic of habitat types.*

## Ask the Biologist

**Q:** I caught (and released) this largemouth bass in an Adirondack wilderness pond. The fish had slash marks on its body and was missing part of its dorsal fin. It appeared to be acting fine. What could have made these wounds?

Matt Pavlick, Lancaster



**A:** While it's impossible to know for sure, based on the photo it looks like this bass may have escaped becoming lunch to an osprey. Like eagles, osprey have the ability to grab larger fish in their talons and then carry them off to eat (see opposite page). The two parallel slashes on the one side appear to be the correct spacing of osprey talons; an eagle would have left three marks. According to Cornell Lab of Ornithology's website, osprey success rates range from 25% to 70%, so it's not hard to envision some wounded fish out there as a result of near misses. Fish can recover from some amazing wounds—like this one appears to be doing.  
—Jonathan Fieroh, DEC Aquatic Biologist

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