



Coyote or Dog?

While out with a 4-H group in a hemlock swamp near Ithaca on March 23rd, I unexpectedly came across what I believe is a coyote den. Looking in, I was surprised to see the movement of puppies. I snapped several photos and quickly left, not wanting to disturb things any more. Are these coyotes?

David Hall
Ithaca

Your photo certainly piqued the interest of our biologists. We checked with Robin Holevinski, a PhD candidate studying coyotes at SUNY ESF, and here's what she had to say:

"The den site sounds like it corresponds to what a coyote would use, but these pups do not quite look like coyote pups. A photo that we collected last year of a coyote den shows some differences in the shape of the pups' faces, although they do look similar. I also would not expect to see the white markings on the toes (of the standing pup) in a coyote pup. The fact that the pups were about 12 inches long on March 23rd indicates breeding in early January, which is not typical, but not impossible for coyotes."

Robin provided this photo of known coyote pups, so we thought we'd let our readers decide. It would be nice to see the pups again in a few weeks to know for sure, though.

—Dave Nelson, Editor



coyote pups

Fishing Fun

My ten-year-old nephew Duncan Lindsay went fishing at the DEC boat launch on Schroon Lake and caught and released this 20-inch largemouth bass. His simple gear was a worm and a bobber. The smile on his face says it all: fishing dreams come true in New York State!

Tom Lindsay
Albany



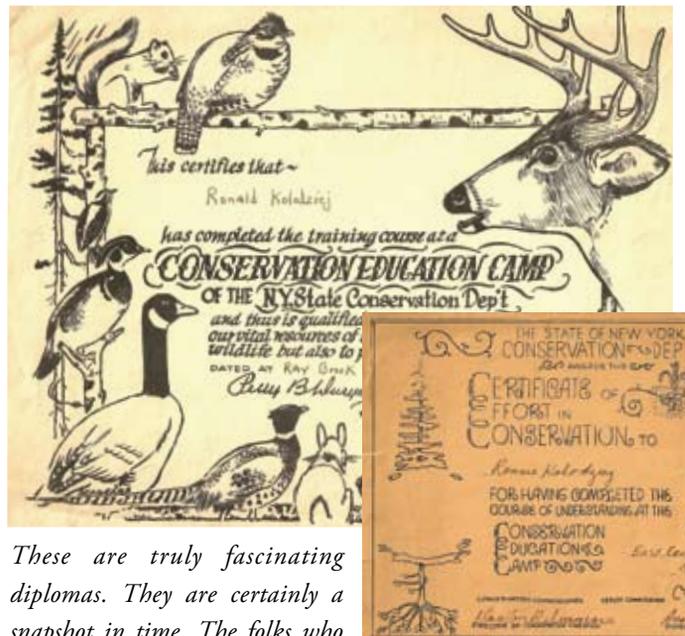
What a great photo. It's always nice to hear of a family's fishing adventures. Your nephew is quite the fisherman—that's a catch anyone would be proud of!

—Eileen Stegemann, Assistant Editor

Old School

Bill Sharick's fond memories of Camp Rushford in the 1960s (*Rushford Reflections*, February 2010 issue) generated many warm remembrances, including this one from longtime friend of the magazine, Ron Kolodziej of Fonda:

"I thought you might like to see my diplomas—circa 1951 and 1952—from two Conservation Education Camps. I know they date me, but they are prized possessions."



These are truly fascinating diplomas. They are certainly a snapshot in time. The folks who currently oversee DEC's education camps were most impressed. The fact that you retained these in such great shape for nearly 60 years is a clear demonstration of how important those weeks at camp were to a budding young conservationist!

—Dave Nelson, Editor

The Price of Litter

While on a walk with his camera recently, my husband Brian took a photo of a beautiful deer with a plastic fast-food drink lid stuck to its poor nose. I think the photo speaks volumes.

Christine Straight
Pomfret,
Chautauqua
County



This is a compelling photo, and one that clearly illustrates the consequences of littering. Based on the photo, it does not appear the garbage is preventing the deer from eating, though it certainly can't be comfortable. It is a good reminder that we all need to be mindful of our resources and the world we share with other creatures.

—Jenna Kerwin, Staff Writer

Editor's Note: This photo was taken in Shumla, quite near the boyhood home of your editor. I have fond memories of the area and can recall the mink farm there. —Dave Nelson

Marble Fawn

I thought you might be interested in this photo, taken in Turnpike State Forest in Allegany County. I stumbled across the fawn and snapped a few pictures.

Bradley Bledsoe
Almond, Allegany County



Your photo has captured a rare sight—a skewbald fawn. A fawn's coat is normally brown with white spots, but in a skewbald fawn the white is predominant. Deer with this trait are uncommon in the wild because they are easily seen and likely suffer higher mortality rates.

—Eileen Stegemann, Assistant Editor

Teenage Bug

While sitting in my backyard, I encountered this unusual-looking insect. With some research, I found an article on the appearance of cicadas. Is it normal to have seen this insect by itself, and is it true they will surface from underground every 17 years?

Dorothy Desautels
Troy



Cicadas tend to occur in 13- or 17-year "broods," which means they spend those years in the soil, clinging firmly to tree roots and feeding on sap. They then pupate and metamorphose into adults to fly away, mate, lay eggs and begin the cycle anew. They do

not emerge everywhere at the same time and each brood varies in the overall population size. The cicadas that emerge this year will likely be from eggs that were laid either in 1993 or 1997.

—Jerry Carlson, DEC Research Scientist



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