



### Osprey Action

I thought you would enjoy this osprey picture I recently took.  
Clifford Dayton  
Long Island

*Great capture! It shows how osprey carry fish fore and aft, rather than sideways. Look for osprey along coastlines, and on major lakes, rivers and wetlands upstate.*

—Conservationist staff

### Permanently Tracked?

I read with interest the “Tracking the Short-eared Owl” article in the February 2013 issue. The range of the satellite-tracked and mapped owl is impressive considering the short time-span required for it to cover this range. The picture of the satellite transmitter attached to an owl noted the batteries provide power for about 12 to 18 months. When the batteries are depleted, does the transmitter fall off on its own and free the bird?

Jerry Kron  
Conklin, Broome County



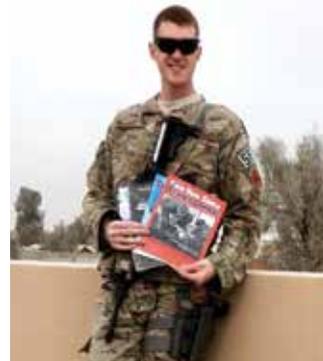
*Great question. First, let me clarify the difference between two types of transmitters. VHF (radio) transmitters last for 12 to 18 months, and under the best conditions have a straight-line range of 1-3 miles. These transmitters are tracked manually to get localized data. PTT (satellite) transmitters theoretically last about three years. PTT transmitters communicate with satellites and provide data of the*

*bird's migration and breeding grounds. The weight and placement of the transmitters in no way inhibit the bird, and they are sewn on with cotton thread, which in time will rot and fall off.*

—Glenn Hewitt, DEC Wildlife Technician

### Magazines Overseas

My brother recently received some magazines I sent him, and I wanted to pass along his thank-you note and photo he sent me: “Just wanted to thank you for the *Conservationist* magazines! It's really great being able to see and read about the beautiful nature back home, especially while I'm surrounded by desert! I really have enjoyed reading these. Thanks again! — Jeffrey Walters”



Jacque Walters

*We're happy your brother is enjoying his magazines, and we would like to thank him for his service!*

—Conservationist staff

### Unearthing Family History

*DEC librarian Emily Wager recently helped a reader gather information about her grandfather, William C. Adams, a game protector with the Department in the '30s and '40s. We thought we'd share some of their comments:*

“Attached is some information that Law Enforcement staff found on your grandfather. In the 1932 Annual Report, the governor rewarded him and other Game Protectors for unusual services. I hope this gives you more insight into your grandfather and his time spent at the Conservation Department.”—Emily Wager

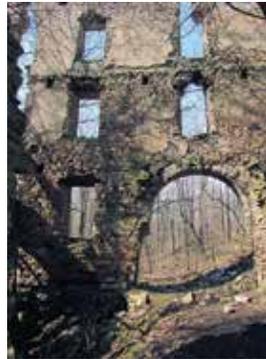
“You have given us a huge gift by your diligent searching. I am thrilled to have this information about my grandfather. His letters are so warm and interesting but the ones I have, ended in 1943. Among other things, I note he was a fine, clear thinker and writer. In his letters, he spoke less about himself and more about his family so it is truly lovely to have this other side of his life detailed. He was an avid hunter and if I recall correctly, one day in the '40s, he went hunting with a nephew(?) of Winston Churchill and Errol Flynn. He described Errol as a nice guy but a very indifferent shot!”—Susan Adams Farrand

## ✉ LETTERS

### Historic Flour Mill

I discovered this old mill on a nature trail near Gasport (Slayton Settlement Road). I have been by it a million times but have never really noticed it before!

Kim Abrams  
Genesee County



*What nice photos! Many flour, grist and saw mills were in operation in this “mill district” area of Niagara County from the early 1800s to mid 1900s.*

—Conservationist staff

### Colorful Cecropia

My fiancée Ilona and I were cycling when she spotted this



large and colorful insect. I don't know if it is a moth or butterfly and I certainly don't have any idea of its identification beyond that. We were wondering if you could help us with an ID.

Pete Jensen  
Putnam County

*You've come across a cecropia moth—and a great specimen, too! Cecropias are New York's largest moth, and belong to the group of moths known as giant silk moths. Like all giant silk moths, cecropia adults have no functioning mouthparts, so they don't eat. Instead, they survive on fatty reserves they accumulate during the caterpillar stage.*

—Conservationist staff

### Please Carry It Out!

We've received a couple of letters from readers who have come across some wildlife ensnared by plastic. DEC wants to remind everyone to carry out any trash, and also remind anglers to pick up any old or discarded fishing line. To make it more convenient for anglers, receptacles for old fishing line have been installed at several fishing access sites around the state.

### Ask the Biologist:

#### Swimming Squirrels

**Q:** We've had several people write in about seeing swimming squirrels in summer. Janet Quinn of Jefferson County sent us this photo of a swimming red squirrel that she encountered while canoeing Slang Pond (Franklin County). She commented on how it looked calm, not at all in a panic, and seemed like it knew where it was going as it headed directly for a specific log, then landed and scampered off into the woods. Janet wondered if this was a common behavior, and asked if squirrels are known to cross small bodies of water while carrying out their usual activities?



Another reader, Jim Wojdan of Cattaraugus County, also saw a swimming red squirrel while he was kayaking on Lake Abanakee (Hamilton County). He described how when the squirrel reached shore it seemingly collapsed on the closest log and rested for quite some time before taking off.

**A:** Most people will be surprised to find out that it's really not that unusual to see a swimming squirrel. DEC biologists say this is particularly true at certain times of the year, such as the fall, when squirrels are looking for new territories; so a few will swim. Also, there are some squirrels that are driven into the water by a predator. But we would bet that sometimes, they just want to get to the other side!

—Conservationist staff



#### Write to us

Conservationist Letters  
NYSDEC, 625 Broadway  
Albany, NY 12233-4502  
or e-mail us at: [magazine@gw.dec.state.ny.us](mailto:magazine@gw.dec.state.ny.us)

