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Compiled by Rebecca Webster and Jenna DuChene

Tracking Sturgeon

The sturgeon report is in, but it's leaving researchers puzzled.

Each year since 2006, DEC has marked sturgeon from the Hudson with sonic transmitters. The transmitters send signals to receivers when the marked sturgeon return to the river. Biologists use this information to learn about sturgeon migration patterns. While research has shown that sturgeon appear to return to the Hudson every three to five years to spawn, this year, a 7.5-foot-long sturgeon seems to be challenging conventional wisdom. Just two years after being tagged, this sturgeon (named Minerva) was found in the area. Her arrival was even more surprising because traditionally, male sturgeon are the first to return to the Hudson, but the female arrived earlier than some males. Minerva also took an unusual detour near Hyde Park, before continuing up the Hudson. Researchers will continue to follow her progress, as well as the progress of other tagged sturgeon, to learn more about the movements of these unique fish.



DEC photo

Carole Fraser



New Fishing Pier

Anglers across the state have a new opportunity to enjoy their sport in Lake Champlain. The John A. Brooks Memorial Fishing Pier, named after the late Environmental Conservation Officer, recently became the latest addition to the lake's shore. Operated and maintained by DEC, the barrier-free pier is located on the lake's fish abundant South Bay, and provides the perfect place for anyone to sample the great fishing, or simply enjoy the beauty of the lake. Anglers will enjoy fishing for a variety of species, including yellow perch, white perch, northern pike and largemouth bass.

The pier is located along New York State Route 22, just north of the Village of Whitehall, and is accessible for those with disabilities.

Helping to Stop the Blaze

On Friday, July 11, a 21-person group consisting of New York forest rangers and personnel from DEC's lands and forests, operations and pesticides programs left to help combat wildfires raging across the Los Padres National Forest in Big Sur, California. The firefighters were dispatched via an agreement with the US Forest Service, which allows firefighters to be shared and dispatched throughout

the country. New York forest fire crews have a particularly high performance record and are often called upon by the US Forest Service in situations like this. The team left Saratoga Springs Fire Cache for Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, and flew directly to California. They remained about two weeks, fighting active fires southeast of Big Sur, in the East Basin Fire Complex. The fires in this area reportedly burned 89,735 acres of timber and brush, with extreme fire behavior.

Junior Hunting Law

Thanks to the Junior Hunting Law, 14- and 15-year-olds now have the



Jim Clayton

i BRIEFLY

opportunity to hunt big game with a firearm, as long as they are accompanied by an experienced, qualified adult. Governor David Paterson signed the bill into law, expressing the importance of hunting and the rich history of the sport in New York State. Historically, hunting has consistently instilled a sense of appreciation of nature and New York's abundant resources in young people. The new law is expected to encourage young adults to learn and practice responsible hunting techniques, as well as to explore the vast surroundings of their state. Also, local, upstate communities could see a boost in their economies, thanks to the potential increase in hunting. Visit www.dec.ny.gov for more information.

Challenging New York Schools to Go Green

To encourage the younger generation to "Go Green," DEC put forth a new program called the Green Schools Challenge. The program aims to help New York State schools develop new recycling plans or improve ones already in existence. The "challenge" is open to any private or public elementary, junior high or high school. Debbie Jackson, Environmental Program Specialist at DEC, believes the program is a great way to get schools more involved in complying with their local recycling laws.

"This is a positive way to get schools interested in the environment," Jackson said. Schools will submit data about how much they have recycled and how much waste they have reduced, and then DEC will choose winners based on the amount of waste diverted, school wide participation, creativity and effectiveness. Visit DEC's website at www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/43349.html for applications and more information about the Green Schools Challenge.



Northern Forest Institute

Historic Masten House in Newcomb, Essex County, will soon be the Northern Forest Institute for Conservation Education and Leadership Training, a new Adirondack-based leadership and training facility. It sits on 46 acres of property owned by the Open Space Institute's Open Space Conservancy and is located near the Adirondack High Peaks region, in an area rich in cultural and industrial heritage. It will be operated by SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry and will instruct and guide leaders and educators in future decisions about 25 million acres of forested land, extending from Lake Ontario at Tug Hill and reaching across the Adirondacks into Northern Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine. Though the facility will focus on meeting the educational and research needs of professional audiences, the institute will also serve the general public—particularly college and secondary school students. And because Masten House was originally built in 1905, the new facility will also help tell the story of the founding and development of the Adirondacks.

Ask the Biologist

Q: Why are there more deer-and moose-car collisions in the fall?

A: Fall is the breeding season for both white-tailed deer and moose in New York State—mid-November for deer, and late September through early October for moose. During this time, males increase their daily movement as they search for females. The females also travel more because of pursuing males. As such, more cross roads at this time, which is why drivers need to be especially alert in the fall. In addition, the shorter days mean more commuters are on the road at dusk when there is poor visibility and the animals are more active. In the case of moose, their population has been increasing in certain parts of the state and so more drivers are encountering them. Moose are especially dangerous to drivers as their dark brown coat and tall stature keeps their eyes above the height where they would reflect headlights. In addition, moose have a high center of gravity which tends to cause the animal to be undercut by passenger cars during collisions, causing considerable damage to cars and passengers. Drivers can reduce their chance of a collision with these animals by exercising extra caution when driving around dawn or dusk, especially in moose and deer crossing areas as indicated by Department of Transportation signage.

—Chuck Dente, DEC Wildlife Biologist