



Bill Banaszewski



James Clayton

BearVault

## Smarter than the Average Bear

A small, middle-aged female black bear in the northeastern Adirondacks has become a national celebrity. Called Yellow-Yellow for the two yellow ear tags that biologists put on to keep tabs on her, the bear has figured out how to open the once-believed impenetrable storage canister, the BearVault500. The canister is one of many on the market meant to keep camper's food and necessities safe and secure, away from rummaging bear paws. While the vault baffled the biggest grizzlies in Yellowstone National Park, Yellow-Yellow deciphered the canister's tricky locking mechanism. (Author's note: you have to squeeze the lid hard in a particular spot while simultaneously twisting—there are many people, myself included, who have difficulty doing this.) Eye-witnesses to the bear's cunning problem-solving describe how she bites the canister's lid and twists her whole head

to remove it. Campers have also reported seeing other bears starting to solve the puzzle. Currently, the makers of the BearVault500 are developing a new canister and plan to test it on none other than Yellow-Yellow.

## Archery in the Schools

Archery is the new gym choice for many students in some schools across New York



James Clayton

State. First begun in select New York schools in January 2008, the National Archery in the Schools Program (NASP) seeks to promote student education, physical education and participation in the lifelong sport of archery. NASP is aimed at 4th-12th graders and teaches archery history, safety, technique, equipment, mental concentration and self-improvement. Interestingly, it appears that students who don't normally participate and enjoy sports-related or extra-curricular activities seem to excel at the program. Twenty-eight schools from 21 New York school districts participate in NASP, and an additional 25 schools are signing up this year. For more information on NASP, visit DEC's website at [www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/49506.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/49506.html).



## Native Returns

Recently, scientists discovered wild young Atlantic salmon in the Salmon River, New York's largest coldwater tributary to Lake Ontario. Gone from the river since the late 1800s—the result of overfishing, deforestation and construction of dams—the return of wild salmon after more than a 100-year absence is cause for celebration. One possible explanation for their return is that the invasive alewife, a small prey fish of the salmon, has been decreasing in number. Alewife contain high levels of thiaminase, which when eaten causes low levels of thiamine in adult salmon and their eggs, and the early death of newly hatched fish. The discovery of young wild salmon (offspring of previously stocked fish) provides hope that the fish will steadily grow and thrive. DEC and the United States Geological Survey plan to continue to monitor tributaries to track populations of this important native fish.



Rick Wouda

### Daredevil Muskie

A tagged muskellunge is believed to have survived a trip over Niagara Falls. The muskie, originally tagged and released in the Upper Niagara River near Navy Island in 2008, was caught by an angler this past March in the Lower Niagara River. While the fish could have traveled by way of the Welland Canal to the Lake Ontario system, biologists feel this is unlikely, and that the more probable route was via Niagara Falls. This wouldn't be the first time, as previous studies have also documented similar muskellunge movements from the Upper to Lower Niagara River.

### EAB Invades New York

The destructive, non-native emerald ash borer (EAB) has been found in New York. DEC and the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets first documented the invasive insect in Cattaraugus County, but how far the insect has spread is unknown. EAB is responsible for the destruction of more than 70 million ash trees in the United States. DEC and staff from various other agencies and organizations set



David Cappaert — Michigan State University — Bugwood.org

traps and conducted surveys of suspected infected areas to determine the range of the beetle in New York. If you see one of the purple prism traps, please leave it undisturbed. To prevent EAB from spreading further, DEC is asking everyone to follow the new firewood regulations found at [www.dec.ny.gov/animals/28722.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/28722.html). For more information on EAB, visit [www.dec.ny.gov/animals/7253.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/7253.html).

### Winning Marinas

Two marinas are being recognized for providing outstanding marine pumpout services. Boaters nominate the marinas during a boater survey conducted by the New York State Environmental Facilities Corporation Clean Vessel Assistance Program (CVAP). The annual excellence awards recognize marinas that provide high-quality, affordable pumpout services, thus protecting and improving water quality in the state's navigable waterways. This year's winners were: the City of New Rochelle Municipal Marina at the Echo Bay Yacht Club (not-for-profit/municipalities category); and Barrett Marine Inc. on the Cayuga-Seneca Canal and Finger Lakes (private marina category). The winning marinas will receive grants that reimburse the construction, maintenance and promotion of their facilities. For more information about CVAP, visit [www.nysefc.org](http://www.nysefc.org) and click on CVAP in the "Programs" menu.

### Long Island's First Turkey Season



Susan Shafer

This November, Long Island hunters will be able to enjoy the first wild turkey hunting season. Wild turkey disappeared from the area in the mid nineteenth century due to a reduction in forested habitat, but thanks to reintroduction efforts, the population is now estimated at more than 3,000. The new hunting season will be open in all of Suffolk County and limited to five days. Successful hunters will be encouraged to bring harvested birds to a DEC check station so staff can record data to use in evaluating the season. For details, regulations and guidelines of the new wild turkey season, please visit DEC's website at [www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/8366.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/8366.html).

***Editors Note:** Please note that on page 25 of the June 2009 issue, the caterpillars pictured are eastern tent caterpillars, not the similar-looking forest tent caterpillar. The accompanying photo shows the difference—the eastern tent caterpillar has a white line down its back with light blue and black spots on its sides; the forest tent caterpillar has white footprint-shaped marks down its back and light blue stripes on its sides. In addition, forest tent caterpillars do not make tents in crotches of trees.*



James Clayton