

# On Patrol

Carl Heilman II

*Real stories from Conservation Officers and Forest Rangers in the field*



## Glass Eel Poacher— New York City

A New York food fish dealer paid a \$10,000 fine after pleading guilty to commercialization of protected wildlife and unlawful possession of undersized fish. Based on a tip from federal agents, DEC ECOs seized a shipment of live “glass eels,” valued at \$60,000, and returned them to New York State waters. They would have sold for more than double that amount in Asia. These eels, known as “elvers” or glass eels due to their translucent appearance and small size at the juvenile stage in their life cycle, are reared to adult size for the food fish market. DEC staff involved in this investigation included the late Lt. John Fitzpatrick, Lt. Jesse Paluch, Lt. Liza Bobseine, Lt. John Murphy, Inv. Nick Desotelle, Inv. Sara Komonchak and Inv. Jeff Conway.

## Illegal Border Crossing— Westchester County

ECO Tom Koepf was conducting deer checks at a local meat processor in the Town of Somers when he encountered a hunter dropping off three deer with Pennsylvania tags. Officer Koepf

explained that it is illegal to bring whole deer carcasses into New York State from Pennsylvania because PA is considered positive for chronic wasting disease (CWD). Officers Koepf and James Davey issued a summons for illegal importation of white-tailed deer across state lines, and they seized all three deer. The deer will be tested for CWD and then be completely destroyed, antlers and all. CWD is a fatal disease in deer, elk and moose, and it poses a serious threat to the entire deer population. DEC urges hunters to be aware of CWD regulations when hunting deer outside the state.



## Fallen Hiker Hospitalized— Greene County

A 73-year-old male and three companions from Connecticut began a day hike in North Mountain Wild Forest

Contributed by ECO Lt. Liza Bobseine and Forest Ranger Capt. Stephen Scherry

from North/ South Lake Campground. At approximately 1:05 p.m., the subject approached the edge of a ledge and fell approximately 15 feet. His companions called 911, and Forest Rangers Rob Dawson, Christine Nelson, Joseph Bink, Chris DiCintio, Jeff Breigle and local EMS personnel responded. The subject stated he had hit his head and lost consciousness. He had a laceration on the back of his head and complained of pain in his lower back. Rangers evaluated him and put him into a litter. With an assist from low-angle rope systems, they carried him up to the trail, and then out to North Lake Beach trailhead, arriving at 4:50 p.m. A waiting Med Flight helicopter flew the subject to Albany Medical Center for further treatment.

## Case of Mistaken Identity— Lewis County

ECOs Tim Worden and Greg Maneeley handled a case involving an individual who had turned himself in for illegally taking a bull moose. The subject stated he thought the moose was a huge white-tailed deer buck when he shot it. After realizing his error, the man called DEC to confess. During his interview, it was determined that he had already used his deer tags and should not have been hunting deer anyway. The subject appeared in court and paid a fine of \$1,200. He also pled guilty to hunting deer without a valid license and, as part of a conditional discharge, donated \$125 to the Lewis County Association of Sportsman's Clubs decoy fund, in addition to paying the \$75 surcharge. The man's hunting privileges are subject to revocation for a period of up to five years.