

# Field Notes...



## Noteworthy news from the Division of Fish, Wildlife and Marine Resources

ISSUE 31: NOVEMBER 12, 2010

### Volunteers Needed

- **Help DEC Monitor Wild Raptor Birds This Winter.**



Volunteers are needed this winter to help with DEC's monitoring survey of New York's winter raptor populations like the short-eared owl (*Asio flammeus*), northern harrier (*Circus cyaneus*), rough-legged hawk (*Buteo lagopus*), and red-tailed hawk (*Buteo lineatus*). The populations of short-eared owls and northern harriers have been in decline as much of their preferred open habitat (i.e. grasslands) has diminished in New York State. To better track the movement and habitat use of these birds, DEC has been capturing, banding, and radio-tagging wild raptors, as well as observing habitat characterization

at seven different winter raptor concentration areas across the state. Surveys have been conducted for the last three years on a monthly basis from December through March. Information gathered from this study will assist in developing management recommendations, environmental review guidance, and long-term monitoring strategies for the short-eared owl and northern harrier. As survey efforts continue for the upcoming 2010/2011 winter, DEC is requesting for assistance from volunteers.

Those interested in volunteering should contact one of the following DEC coordinators located in a DEC region ([view region map](#)) closest to you:

Region 4, Paul Novak: [pgnovak@gw.dec.state.ny.us](mailto:pgnovak@gw.dec.state.ny.us);

Region 5, Theresa Swenson: [tgswenso@gw.dec.state.ny.us](mailto:tgswenso@gw.dec.state.ny.us);

Region 6, Angie Ross: [amross@gw.dec.state.ny.us](mailto:amross@gw.dec.state.ny.us);

Region 8, Jenny Landry: [jalandry@gw.dec.state.ny.us](mailto:jalandry@gw.dec.state.ny.us) ;

Region 9, Charles Rosenburg: [cprosenb@gw.dec.state.ny.us](mailto:cprosenb@gw.dec.state.ny.us)



*Image: the radio-transmitter attached to the short-eared owl releases a signal picked up by satellites to track the birds movement. ~Photographs courtesy of NYSDEC: N. Allen.*

## Significant Notes

- **The Value of Wild Game.**

Each year hunters from across New York successfully harvest a variety of mammals and game birds during their respective open seasons. But few people appreciate the value of game taken annually from our landscape. According to surveys conducted by DEC's Bureau of Wildlife, hunters in New York harvest over 12 million pounds of game each year. As you might expect, white-tailed deer make up the vast majority of this amount at slightly less than 11 million pounds (10,845,000 lbs), followed by waterfowl (530,000 lbs), wild turkeys (368,000 lbs), rabbits (170,000 lbs), squirrels (143,000 lbs), pheasants (116,000 lbs) and black bear (93,750 lbs). Other small game including grouse, varying hares and woodcock account for another 100,000 lbs annually. If you think of this harvest in terms of meals, NY's wild game bounty provides over 48 million servings per year. To put a dollar value on this harvest, consider that a pound of ground beef or pork from your local supermarket would cost at least \$ 3.00/lb and boneless chicken or turkey would cost at least \$2.00/lb. At these prices, New York's annual harvest of wild game has a value close to \$40 million!

- **September Monthly Highlights Available.**

Take a minute to look through our [Division's September Monthly Highlights](#) (pdf, 878 kb) for updates on New York's fish and wildlife research programs and outreach activities. September's featured topics include: trout population surveys on Ostego Lake, walleye and white perch stocking interactions in Long Island waters, re-discovery of the threatened Bulrush plant, wild turkey summer sighting survey results, invasive sea lamprey control efforts, "Science on the River" event overview, and much more!

- **Bat Fungal Disease Continues to Spread.**



"White-nose Syndrome" (WNS), a white fungal growth found on bats and linked to a 90 percent decline in New York's bat populations, has now been documented in 32 caves and mines of New York. Since the original detection of the fungus in 2007, DEC along with many other organizations, have coordinated with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to conduct extensive investigation on bat populations affected by WNS. This year, the syndrome has continued to spread, and has likely reached all of New York's caves sheltering hibernating bats. [Get more on this story](#) in the DEC press release and learn more about the [White-Nose Syndrome](#) on the USFWS website.

*Image: The white fungus typically grows around the mouth and nose of bats, as depicted on this little brown bat. ~Photograph courtesy of NYSDEC: Al Hicks.*

- **Trout Unlimited Awards DEC Biologist, Rich Preall.**

Senior Aquatic Biologist, Rich Preall based in DEC's Region 5 Raybrook office, received the 2010 New York State Council of Trout Unlimited's Professional Resource Award. [Trout Unlimited](#) presents this annual award to a conservation professional that makes significant steps toward protecting fish and fish habitat. Working at DEC for 26 years, Preall was recognized for his efforts in increasing and expanding New York's endangered round whitefish populations, stabilizing and protecting Heritage strain brook trout populations, and controlling the spread of the invasive snakehead fish.

- **USDA Forestry Initiative Offers Wildlife Funding for Landowners.**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service is providing \$250,000 in federal funding to New York forest land owners for forest land wildlife management.

Through this New England - New York Forest Initiative, private landowners are assisted in conservation planning and management of their private forests to improve wildlife habitat, and control soil erosion. Land owners who would like assistance may call or visit their local USDA Service Center by January 14, 2010 to submit an application and complete the necessary paperwork to establish eligibility. For service center locations and more details on this initiative, review the USDA press release at [www.ny.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.ny.nrcs.usda.gov).

### Check out the *Conservationist* Magazine on Facebook

DEC launched a new Facebook page last week for outdoor enthusiasts to see more photos from *Conservationist* readers, to hear what's coming up in future issues of the magazine, and to learn more about DEC programs and activities. Visitors benefit by learning new tips on living "green," finding out how they can contribute to wildlife research, and reading fun facts about New York's great outdoors. Go to the *Conservationist* Magazine homepage at [www.TheConservationist.org](http://www.TheConservationist.org) and click on the "Find Us On Facebook" button to visit our page.

## Fish & Game Season Reminders

Get all available hunting dates by visiting the [Hunting Seasons](#) webpage.

### Fish

- **November 15: *First Day Ice Fishing Tip-Ups Can Be Used Statewide.***

Tip-ups may be operated on waters of New York State starting November 15, 2010 and continuing through April 30, 2010, both dates inclusive. Review [general ice fishing regulations](#) in the 2010-11 Fishing Regulations Guide.

### Big Game

- **November 19: *Last Day for Big Game Bowhunting in Southern Zones.*** The final day for deer and bear bowhunting in most Southern Zone Wildlife Management Units (WMUs) is November 19, 2010. Bowhunting privileges will re-open in these areas on December 13 through December 21. Review the appropriate [Hunting Season Map](#) for hunting zones that will be closing, and to find other available big game hunting opportunities for the state.
- **November 20: *Opening Day for Regular Firearm Big Game Hunting in Southern Zones.*** Regular firearm deer hunting for Southern Zone Wildlife Management Units (WMUs) and regular black bear hunting for Southeastern WMUs starts November 20, 2010. Regular bear hunting will open in Western and Central Areas on November 27. View the appropriate [Hunting Season Map](#) to identify specific hunting zones and additional season dates. For those hunting in WMUs 3C, 3H, 3J, and 3K, review [antler restrictions](#). All hunters should be familiar with the Statewide [Big Game Hunting Regulations](#) before going afield.

## Turkey

- **November 19: Last Day for Turkey Hunting in Southeastern, Central and Southwestern Areas of the State.**

The final day for fall turkey hunting in Southeastern, Central, and Northwestern Wildlife Management Units (WMUs) is November 19, 2010. View the [Turkey Hunting Season Map](#) to identify the areas that will be closing.

- **November 20: Turkey Hunting Opens in Suffolk County.**

The first day for fall turkey hunting in Suffolk County, Wildlife Management Unit 1C starts on November 20, 2010 and continues through November 24, 2010, both dates inclusive. View the [Turkey Hunting Season Map](#) for season bag limits. Also, review the [Turkey Hunting Regulations](#) and [Turkey Hunting Tips](#) before going afield.

**REMEMBER: REPORT YOUR HARVEST**

Successful hunters must report take on deer, bear and turkey within 48 hours. **Starting November 17, 2010, the reporting deadline will be extended to seven days.** Simply report your take [online](#) or call toll-free at 1-866-GAME-RPT (1-866-426-3778).

*Click on the icon to get started on your harvest report!*



Remember to Report  
Your Harvest!  
1-866-426-3778  
[www.dec.ny.gov](http://www.dec.ny.gov)

## Migratory Waterfowl

- **November 19: Last Day for Canada Geese Hunting in East Central and Hudson Valley Zones.**

The final day for Canada geese hunting in East Central and Hudson Valley Zones is November 19, 2010. Canada geese hunting opportunities will re-open in the East Central Zone on November 27, 2010 and in the Hudson Valley Zone on December 18, 2010. Review the [Canada Geese Hunting Season Map](#) to identify boundary zones and to find additional Canada geese hunting opportunities.

- **November 20: Last Day for Brant Hunting in Western and Northeastern Zones.**

The final day for brant hunting in [Western and Northeastern Zones](#) is November 20, 2010. Review the [Waterfowl Hunting Season](#) page to find additional opportunities across the state.

- **November 21: Last Day for Canada Geese Hunting in the West Central Zone.**

The last day for Canada geese hunting in the West Central Zone is November 21, 2010. Hunting will re-open in this zone on December 26, 2010 through January 9, 2010, both dates inclusive. View

the [Canada Geese Hunting Season Map](#) to identify the boundary zones and to find additional Canada Geese hunting opportunities.

## Did You Know...?

Though many adult female deer are killed each year by vehicles and hunters, white-tailed fawns are very capable of surviving on their own. At 3 months old, fawns are fully weaned from nursing; and as research shows, orphaned fawns at 4-6 months old have similar survival rates and developmental characteristics as un-orphaned fawns.

[Read more facts about the White-tailed deer on the DEC website!](#)



*Image: an orphaned buck fawn ~Photo courtesy of Jeremy Hurst~*

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