

# Field Notes...



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

ISSUE 34: DECEMBER 10, 2010

### Counting Birds

- **Join in on Audubon's Annual Christmas Bird Count.** Venture outside with binoculars and a field guide to embrace this season's cold with other local enthusiasts counting and identifying our winter birds. From December 14th to January 6th, the Audubon Society, a partner agency with the DEC, will be holding its 111th Annual Christmas Bird Count (CBC), the longest running citizen science survey across the country. Efforts of CBC volunteers over the past 110 years has helped document an extensive database of bird population trends that is used in a vast array of nationwide research and state and local conservation plans for the protection and conservation of our bird species. For detailed information on the CBC and to find out how to participate as a bird counter this winter, visit: [birds.audubon.org/faq/cbc](http://birds.audubon.org/faq/cbc)  
Happy counting!



*Image: The Northern cardinal is a common bird that stays in the Northeast throughout the winter. ~photo by Jerry Acton, courtesy of National Audubon Society~*

### Significant Notes

- **DEC Partners with the National Wild Turkey Federation on Land Acquisition.** This fall DEC completed the acquisition of a 42-acre parcel of land adjacent to Tioughnioga Wildlife Management Area (WMA) ([view a map](#)) in Madison County. The property was initially purchased by the New York State Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF) along with a small grant from their "More Places to Hunt" Program. They generously donated this land parcel to the people of New York State as the newest section in this popular WMA. The parcel is located on Corkinsville Road in the Town of Nelson, and will provide high quality upland habitat for turkeys, deer, migrant songbirds, and other wildlife. This acquisition will keep the land in accessible wildlife habitat that DEC and partner organizations such as NWTF can manage to benefit a number of wildlife species. The acquisition brings the total size of the WMA to approximately 3,650 acres and provides public access for hiking, bird watching,

camping, snowshoeing, hunting, fishing, and trapping. Tioughnioga WMA is located between the villages of New Woodstock and Erieville about 6 miles southeast of Cazenovia, NY.

- **TIPP Environmental Conservation Officers Online.**

You can now report environmental violations, including fish and wildlife poaching or other illegal activities through DEC's new [online TIPP reporting system](#). Submit the form anonymously or confidentially and answer basic questions like what occurred, when it happened and where the violation was witnessed. With each report DEC's Environmental Conservation Officers (ECOs) can complete investigations of complaints and make potential arrests in a timely manner against those who are violating environmental laws. Complaints can still be called in to DEC's hotline at 1-800-TIPP-DEC (1-800-847-7332), which is recommended if the situation requires an immediate response. Read more about this new reporting system in [DEC's press release](#).

- **Illegal Clam Dredging Detected in Lake Montauk.**

Following an investigation into the illegal dredging of a Montauk marina, the owner of the marina and two local marine contractors have agreed to a \$130,000 penalty and to remove illegally dredged material from two associated sites. The penalty will include payments that will directly benefit the Town of East Hampton's Lake Montauk hard clam enhanced restoration project. Read more on this story in the [DEC press release](#).

- **Winter Storm Incident Kills Bears in Allegany County.**

On the weekend of December 4, 2010, heavy rains and strong winds caused a tree to topple onto power lines in the town of Alma, Allegany County. Shortly after the lines came down, an adult female black bear and one of her two cubs attempted to pass under the live wires. The sow (female bear) and cub were both electrocuted when they came in contact with the downed wires. DEC Law Enforcement responded to secure the bears until an investigation could be completed. Region 9 Wildlife Staff responded to examine and remove the carcasses of a 230 pound sow and 97 pound cub. The fate of the second cub is unknown; however, scientific documentation has shown that black bear cubs can be self sufficient as early as six months of age even though they normally remain with the sow for just under a year and half (16-17 months of age). Additionally, according to DEC wildlife biologist, Chuck Dente, if the cub is around 90 pounds it will have a very high chance of surviving on its own and will soon be finding a den site for the winter.



*Image: mother and her cub that were killed by downed power lines in Allegany County.  
~Photo courtesy of NYSDEC, Region 9~*

# Fish and Game Season Reminders

## Fish

### **(Commercial and Recreational)**

- **December 15: *Final Day for Striped Bass and Weakfish Commercial Fishing.***  
December 15, 2010 marks the final day for commercial fisheries to harvest striped bass and to directly harvest weakfish. Commercial fishing for weakfish is closed to all gears November 16th through March 31st; however, during the closed period, there is a by-catch limit of weakfish for all gears EXCEPT hook and line. The by-catch limit is 100 pounds of weakfish provided there is at least 100 pounds of fish other than weakfish aboard the vessel. This enables commercial fishermen using net gear to bring weakfish back to the dock that are caught incidentally while fishing for other species, reducing discard waste. For questions or concerns please contact the Bureau of Marine Resources by [email](#) or by phone at: 631-444-0435.
- **December 15: *Final Day for Striped Bass Recreational Fishing in Marine Waters.***  
The last day to recreational fish for striped bass in marine waters south of the George Washington Bridge is December 15, 2010. To find other fishing opportunities in this area, review the [saltwater fishing regulations](#) online.

## Migratory Waterfowl

- **December 11: *Last Day for Hunting Ducks, Coots, Mergansers in the Northeast Zone.***  
The final day to hunt for ducks, coots, and mergansers in the [Northeast Waterfowl Zone](#) is December 11, 2010.
- **December 13: *Last Day for Hunting Snow Geese in the Western Zone.***  
The final day to hunt for snow geese in the [Western Waterfowl Zone](#) is December 13, 2010. Hunting opportunities will re-open for this zone on December 26, 2010.
- **December 13: *Last Day for Hunting Canada Geese in Lake Champlain and South Zones.***  
The final day to hunt for Canada geese in both the [Lake Champlain and South Zones](#) is December 13, 2010. Canada geese hunting will re-open on December 26, 2010 for the South Zone only.
- **December 16: *Last Day for Hunting Ducks, Coots and Mergansers in the East-Central Zone.***  
The final day to hunt for ducks, coots, and mergansers in the [East Central Waterfowl Hunting Zone](#) is December 16, 2010.
- **December 17: *Brant Hunting Opens in Long Island.***  
Brant hunting opens for the [Long Island Waterfowl Hunting Zone](#) on December 17, 2010 and

continues through to January 11, 2011. View the [2010-11 Waterfowl Hunting Seasons](#) to identify season bag limits. Please remember that all licensed waterfowl hunters must register with HIP and have a federal migratory bird/duck stamp; details on this and additional information can be found in the migratory waterfowl hunting [regulations and license requirements](#) online.

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

## **Big Game**

- **December 12: Last Day for Muzzleloader Deer Hunting in Select Northern Zone Areas.**

The final day for muzzleloader hunting in Wildlife Management Units (WMUs) 5A, 5G, 5J, 6A, 6C, 6H, 6G is December 12, 2010. View the [Deer Muzzleloader Season Map](#) to identify hunting area boundaries and harvest information.

- **December 12: Last Day for Regular Firearm Big Game Hunting in Southern Zone Areas.**

The last day for regular firearm bear and deer hunting in Southern Zone Wildlife Management Units (WMUs) is December 12, 2010. View the appropriate [Big Game Season Map](#) to identify hunting area boundaries that will be closing.

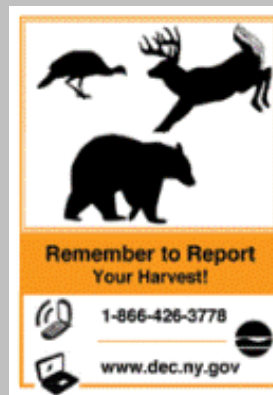
- **December 13: Big Game Muzzleloader Hunting Opens in Southern Zone Areas.**

Muzzleloader hunting for bear and deer opens in all Southern Zones on December 13, 2010 and the season continues through December 21, 2010. View the appropriate [Big Game Season Map](#) to identify hunting area boundaries and harvest information. Also, review big game [hunting regulations](#) and [hunting license](#) information before going afield.

### **REMEMBER: REPORT YOUR HARVEST**

Successful hunters must report take on deer, bear and turkey within 7 days. *Effective November 17, 2010, the reporting deadline was extended from 48 hours to 7 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!*



## **Furbearer/Small Game**

- **December 13: Varying Hare Hunting Opens for Southeastern Zones.**

Hunting for varying hare (snowshoe hare) opens in Southeastern Zones on December 13, 2010

and the season continues through February 28, 2011. View the [Varying Hare Season Map](#) to identify hunting area boundaries.

- **December 15: Mink and Muskrat Trapping Opens in NYC and Long Island.**

Mink and muskrat trapping season opens in New York City and Long Island on December 15, 2010. Additionally, mink may be hunted in these areas with a firearm not larger than a .22 caliber during the trapping season. Please review zone ordinance laws in your area before using any firearms. View the [Trapping Season Map](#) to identify trapping area boundaries and review [trapping regulations](#) and [license information](#) before going afield.

### Did You Know...?

For the winter months, downy woodpeckers survive by flocking with other bird species, like chickadees and nuthatches, so they can spend less time watching out for predators and have better chances in finding food with their feathered friends.



Keep an eye out for this active woodpecker on your winter bird feeders!

Also, learn more about New York's winter birds by reading [Feathered Friends of Winter](#), a previous article from the *Conservationist* magazine that is now online.

*Image: A male downy woodpecker.  
~Photo courtesy of U.S. Fish and  
Wildlife Services~*

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