

Field Notes...



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

ISSUE 37: DECEMBER 31, 2010

Significant Notes

- **Ice Safety and Ice Fishing.**

As ice forms on most of our New York waters this season, it is important to be aware of ice safety. A general rule is to make sure there is a minimum of three to four inches of solid ice before venturing out to your ice fishing location. Some safety measures to follow are: use a spud and check ice thickness as you walk out, fish with a buddy, and bring a rope and ice-picks. Lastly, use your best judgment when deciding to go out as ice conditions can change daily. Find out the conditions in an area near you by calling our fishing hotline numbers or reviewing weekly fishing reports found at www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/fishhotlines.html.

- **Commercial Harvest Trip Limit Changes.**

Effective January 1, 2010, harvest limits will be changing for bluefish, scup and summer flounder. Bluefish increases from 2,000 lbs to a 5,000 pound daily trip limit. Scup harvest will change from a 2,000 pound daily trip limit to a 30,000 pound weekly trip limit. The summer flounder *daily trip limit* will be lowered to 70 lbs and the summer flounder *weekly trip limit* program will be closed until further notice. Visit the [Commercial Fishing](#) webpage for commercial trip limit and 2011 draft quota distribution information. For questions or concerns contact the Bureau of Marine Resources by [email](#) or by phone at 631-444-5621.

Laws & Rulemaking

- **Proposed Regulation to Re-open State Shellfish Lands.**

Public comments are being accepted from December 29, 2010 to February 14, 2011 on the proposed regulatory change of the New York Code Rules and Regulations (NYCRR) Part 41 to reclassify State shellfish lands as certified or open to shellfish harvest. This proposal is based on documentation by the Bureau of Marine Resources that previously closed shellfish lands within the towns of Southold, Southampton, Riverhead, Brookhaven and Oyster Bay now meet the sanitary requirements for the safe harvest and consumption of molluscan shellfish (clams, mussels, oysters, and scallops). Text of this proposed regulations and information on how to submit comments can be found on the [DEC website](#).

Hunting Season Reminders

Small Game

-January 01, 2011-

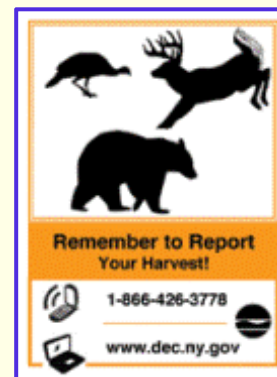
- *Varying Hare Hunting Opens in Southwestern Areas of the State* and will remain open through January 31, 2011 ([view the season map](#)).

Big Game

-January 03, 2011-

- *Special Firearms Season Opens in Parts of Suffolk County*. Hunters may take deer of either sex, Monday thru Friday only, using shotgun and muzzleloader, and must have a special landowner endorsement and town permit. View more details on the [special firearms season](#).

Report take on deer, bear or turkey within 7 days



Migratory Waterfowl

**Please remember that all licensed waterfowl hunters must register with the Harvest Information Program (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](#)*

-January 03, 2011-

- *Final Day for Canada Geese Hunting in the [Hudson Valley Zone](#).*

-January 06, 2011-

- *Final Day for Snow Geese Hunting in the Southeastern Waterfowl Hunting Zone*. The season will re-open on March 01, 2011.

-January 09, 2011-

- *Final Day to Hunt Snow Geese, Ducks, Coots, and Mergansers in the Western Waterfowl Hunting Zone.*
- *Final Day to Hunt Canada Geese in the [South and West Central Zones](#).*



Migratory Waterfowl Hunting Zones
(does not include [Canada Goose Hunting Zones](#))

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

Corrections & Clarifications

- In last week's issue of Field Notes, under the headline "Fish and Game Season Reminders", it was incorrectly stated that the final day for commercial harvesting of bluefish and oyster toadfish was on December 31, 2010. Oyster toadfish commercial fishing remains open through May 14, 2011. Bluefish commercial fishing is open with a 2,000 pound daily trip limit, which will be changing to a 5,000 pound daily trip limit on January 01, 2011. For more information on fishing limits and fishing quota distribution plans visit the [Commercial Fishing](#) webpage.

Did You Know...?

Lobsters molt or shed their hard outer layer each time they grow larger in size, making them soft to the touch and defenseless. After hatching, an American lobster will molt over 20 times within a period of five to eight years before reaching a weight of one pound.

[Read more about the American Lobster on the DEC website](#)

Image: An American Lobster
(*Homarus americanus*)

~Photo credit: U.S. Geological Survey -- Woods Hole, MA



The Division of Fish, Wildlife and Marine Resources
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